

Open-Air Preaching as Radical Street Performance

Stuart M Blythe

A Thesis submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the University of Edinburgh in 2009

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and has not been submitted for any other qualification.

Stuart M Blythe

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere thanks to a number of people for making this research possible:

To the many individuals who gave time, information, and hospitality, as I pursued enquiries into the case studies which feature in this research, especially members of the Haldane family at Gleneagles, the Iona Community, the Church of Scotland, the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, and not least, Open Air Campaigners (GB).

To the staff at a number of libraries who not only made it possible for me to gain access to resources but treated my interests as important, particular those at the Central Library Aberdeen, Clydebanks Public Library, the Mitchell Library Glasgow, the National Library of Scotland, and New College Library Edinburgh.

To those who have given academic encouragement and support, including, the authors who responded to enquiries, my colleagues at the Scottish Baptist College who have read and commented on my work, and the supervisory staff at New College Edinburgh, initially Dr. William Storrar and Professor Duncan Forrester, and in particular my principal supervisor, Dr. Jolyon Mitchell.

I am also deeply grateful to my family and friends whose encouragement, love, and sacrifices, have enabled me to carry out this research, even while they reminded me that there is more to life than study.

Abstract

In this thesis I examine the ways in which analysing open-air preaching as ‘radical street performance’ can inform our understanding of this expression of Christian preaching. Open-air preaching is commonly associated with negative stereotypes. Most contemporary homiletical writers also largely neglect considering this practice. Through my research, I posit radical street performance as a constructive and illuminating way to understand and analyse open-air preaching.

In chapter 1, I introduce the practice of open-air preaching in relation to relevant homiletical literature. In so doing, I challenge the commonly held stereotypes about open-air preaching. I do so with reference to the long and diverse nature of the practice. In chapter 2, I critically analyse existing ‘preaching as performance’ literature. I first demonstrate the ways in which these authors show the suitability of performance as a concept for understanding preaching. I then go on to consider the limitations of their understandings of preaching as performance for exploring open-air preaching in performance terms. I do this to establish the immediate theoretical context for my own research. In chapter 3, I develop this argument further drawing on the work of performance theorists Jan Cohen-Cruz and Baz Kershaw. I argue accordingly, that radical street performance is a valuable way of understanding and analysing open-air preaching as performance.

On the basis of these theoretical and methodological foundations, in chapters 4-6, I explore three case studies of open-air preaching according to this analytical approach. In chapter 4, I focus on the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century evangelical preaching of James Haldane (1768-1851), whose open-air preaching was directly related to his move to congregational Independency. In chapter 5, I explore the early to mid twentieth century open-air preaching of George MacLeod (1895-1991), founder of the Iona Community. In chapter 6, I analyse the open-air preaching of OAC Ministries GB, a contemporary organisation that seeks to promote and practice open-air preaching in a creative way.

The outcomes of the original research in chapters 4, 5, and 6 demonstrate the applicability and versatility of radical street performance as a way of understanding and analysing open-air preaching in performance terms. It also provides original understandings of the dynamics of each example of open-air preaching examined, highlighting differences and similarities between them.

In chapter 7, I draw together by way of conclusions, the theoretical, theological, and practical outcomes of the research for the practice of open-air preaching and the consequent implications for in-church preaching. In this way I present open-air preaching as a minority but significant practice of incarnational witness which exists in a tense relationship with the dominant practice of in-church preaching.

Contents

Declaration	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Abstract	iv
Contents	vi
Introduction	1
Chapter 1:	7
The Practice of Open-Air Preaching	
Chapter 2:	47
Preaching as Performance	
Chapter 3:	90
Open-Air Preaching as Radical Street Performance	
Chapter 4:	131
James Haldane's Open-Air Preaching as Radical	
Street Performance	
Chapter 5:	176
George MacLeod's Open-Air Preaching as Radical	
Street Performance	

Chapter 6:	217
The Open-Air Preaching of Open Air Campaigners (GB)	
As Radical Street Performance	
Chapter 7:	259
Summary and Conclusions	
Bibliography	277
Appendix	295

Introduction

In this thesis, I examine the ways in which analysing open-air preaching as ‘radical street performance’ can inform our understanding of this expression of Christian preaching. Open-air preaching is a practice largely neglected by most contemporary homiletical writers. Methodologically, this neglect is understandable. Most preaching in the Global North occurs in the context of a congregation gathered in a building for worship. As a consequence of this neglect, however, the long and diverse nature of open-air preaching is ignored. Associated stereotypes are untested. The dynamics of the practice, unexamined. The potential, if any, for this genre of preaching, unexplored. Concurrently, the implications for in-church preaching are not investigated.¹ In contrast to this neglect, in this thesis, I give careful consideration to the practice of open-air preaching, with reference to the concept of radical street performance.

Performance is terminology which has been variously applied to theology in the last twenty years.² This includes in the field of homiletics, the area of my research. In homiletics, a number of writers draw on performance theory, particularly as mediated through performance studies, in order to posit performance as a suitable way for understanding preaching. These writers, in keeping with the general homiletical emphasis, concentrate on in-church preaching and in-building performances. This means, however, that their understandings of preaching as performance, have limited applicability to open-air preaching. In order to move beyond these limitations, I argue that radical street performance, a concept related to ideologically committed, outdoor activities, is a constructive and illuminating way, for understanding open-air preaching in performance terms. I test and support the validity of this argument, by analysing a number of examples of open-air preaching as radical street performance.

¹ I borrow the term ‘in-church’ preaching from the work David Buttrick, *A Captive Voice: The Liberation of Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), 37. I use the term as shorthand to describe preaching which takes place in the context of a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly and normally in a building.

² Trevor A. Hart, ‘Art, Performance and the Practice of Christian Faith’, in *Faithful Performances: Enacting Christian Tradition*, ed. by Trevor A. Hart and Steven R. Guthrie (Hampshire: Ashgate, 2007), 1-9, 5.

I approached this research in open-air preaching, as a practitioner and teacher of homiletics in the Baptist Union of Scotland. Both my preaching experience and teaching are primarily in the area of in-church preaching. Studies at Master's level, however, raised issues relating to the missional function of preaching both in and beyond the church, and its potential socio-political content and qualities.³ In turn, this provoked specific questions regarding the nature of open-air preaching. Although I had a general knowledge of prominent historical examples of open-air preaching, I had little detailed knowledge or experience of the practice. My general response, to the contemporary expressions which I encountered, was overwhelmingly negative. This notwithstanding, it appeared to me that beyond the stereotypes, there may be something significant in the public and marginal nature of this preaching event, worth exploring. In addition, in the light of the other activities in the street with which open-air preachers have to compete for attention, the concept of performance appeared to offer a potential way of exploring open-air preaching from a homiletical perspective. Pursuing this line of enquiry, my research suggested radical street performance as an applicable and valuable way for analysing open-air preaching in performance terms. This thesis, therefore, is the result of exploring these ideas in relation to the research question: in what ways does analysing open-air preaching as radical street performance, inform our understanding of this expression of Christian preaching.

In chapter 1 of this thesis, I introduce the core practice of open-air preaching and position the focus of my research in relation to relevant homiletical literature. I argue, contrary to simplistic stereotypes, that open-air preaching is a significant historic practice of diversity and complexity. Be this as it may, I demonstrate that most contemporary writers in homiletics largely neglect the practice. This being the case, I designate their writings, with respect to open-air preaching, 'literature of neglect'. This neglect, I argue, is to the detriment of both open-air preaching and in-church preaching. At this point, I introduce into the discussion, a small body of significant literature, whose writers positively advocate open-air preaching. I

³ Stuart Blythe, 'The Place and Function of Preaching in the Church's Mission: A Theological Interpretation with Reference to Luke 4:16-30' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Wales, 2002). Some seminal ideas in this work are developed independently in this thesis in relation to open-air preaching and radical street performance.

designate their writings, ‘literature of advocacy’ and discuss a number of the contributions which these writers make to an understanding of open-air preaching. I position my own research, in relation to the literature discussed, as ‘implicit advocacy’, in that I carefully consider open-air preaching, past and present, as a valid expression of Christian preaching.

In chapter 2, I give a critical review of what I designate as the ‘preaching as performance’ literature. This is literature whose writers positively understand preaching in performance terms. These authors have either been influenced by the discipline of performance studies or their own involvement in the arts, theatre, or media.⁴ I demonstrate, through an analytical synthesis of the literature, the ways in which these writers establish connections between the practice of preaching and the concept of performance.⁵ I argue, however, that while their work provides the general theoretical context for understanding preaching as performance, their methodological approach, in a number of ways, is inadequate for understanding open-air preaching in performance terms. I attribute this inadequacy, to the simultaneous limited focus of these writers, on in-church preaching and in-building performances. Through this literature review, therefore, I introduce the analytical concept of preaching understood as performance and position my own research within this wider preaching as performance homiletical field. I also indicate why an alternative approach, to that adopted by the preaching as performance writers, is necessary for understanding open-air preaching in performance terms.

In chapter 3, in order to move beyond the limitations of the preaching as performance literature, I introduce the concept of radical street performance. I do this primarily, by drawing upon and bringing together, the work of leading performance theorists, Jan Cohen-Cruz and Baz Kershaw. As formulated by these authors, radical street

⁴ Throughout I will use the spelling ‘theatre’, except when retaining in quotations and references an original spelling of ‘theater’.

⁵ In the analytical synthesis, I critically bring together under a number of headings, information derived from my analysis of the literature, in order to demonstrate the different ways in which the writers make connections between preaching and the concept of performance. For this approach to a literature review, see Chris Hart, *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination* (London: Sage: 1998), 110-111.

performances are ideologically committed, open-air enactments, which seek to facilitate some sort of transformation. Accordingly, I argue that a close correlation exists between the practice of open-air preaching and the concept of radical street performance. I make this case with specific reference to the nature of the 'radical', the 'streets', and 'performance', as understood in this approach. It is on the basis of this demonstrated correlation that I posit radical street performance as a suitable theoretical concept for understanding and analysing open-air preaching in performance terms. With reference to this, I indicate the methodology by which, in chapters 4, 5, and 6, I explore three case studies of open-air preaching as radical street performance. For the sake of localisation, all of these case studies relate to open-air preaching, which at least in part, occurred in Scotland. Through these case studies, I show the applicability of the concept of radical street performance to open-air preaching and accentuate the particular features of each example in their similarities and differences.

In chapter 4, I examine as radical street performance, the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century open-air preaching of James Haldane (1768-1851). James Haldane and his brother Robert (1764-1842), were key figures in a movement of evangelical renewal in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Scotland. Through the analysis, I demonstrate that James Haldane's open-air preaching and the reactions it provoked, were an important feature in this movement and the course which it took. I argue that while Haldane's open-air preaching was concerned primarily with individual salvation, the event was socially dramatic. This was a result of several factors including its novelty, its conflictual nature, and the status of the preacher as an aristocratic layperson. In addition to this, while Haldane's use of what can be described as intentional theatrics appears limited, he brought to the role of preacher, a commanding presence, reinforced by his stature, dress, and use of voice.

In chapter 5, I explore as radical street performance, the early to mid twentieth century open-air preaching of George F. McLeod (1895-1991), founder of the Iona Community. I demonstrate that his open-air preaching had a breadth in purpose and content. This was related to his incarnational understandings of the integrated relationship between the personal and the social, the spiritual and the material, the religious and the political. I argue that through the event and content of his open-air

preaching he challenged the separation of such ideas. I also demonstrate that MacLeod had a variety of open-air preaching approaches, although these were not necessarily mutually exclusive. In one approach, he encouraged audience participation in keeping with the democratic nature of the streets. In another, he exploited religious symbolism and theatrics to the full. I indicate, therefore, that in his open-air preaching, as in other areas of his life, the designation of showman is appropriate. The role he played, however, was always that of the Church of Scotland minister. It was a role to which he brought skills of language, humour, and the ability to communicate with people starting on the common ground of their interests. In addition, however, I argue that part of the success of MacLeod's open-air preaching, not least at Govan, resulted from the fact that it was embedded within the wider performance of MacLeod and his church in that locality.

In chapter 6, I analyse the open-air preaching of OAC Ministries (GB), a contemporary organisation that promotes open-air preaching. OAC Ministries (GB), being the preferred working name for Open Air Campaigners (GB).⁶ The British branch of this international organisation was formed in 1968 and the Scottish branch in 1984. Conservative in theology, the radical intent of OAC GB open-air preaching, is to see the conversion of individuals to faith in Jesus Christ. I demonstrate, however, that the outcomes of their preaching transcend this primary radical intent. I also argue that their approach to open-air preaching is very pragmatic. On the one hand, they adopt the style they consider most likely to gain a hearing for their message. On the other hand, they eschew controversy in content and practice which may detract from their primary purpose. Be this as it may, through their actions, they do enter the ideological contest of the streets, if only through bearing witness to an alternative reality. I also argue that despite the narrow focus of their message, OAC GB preachers exercise street skills and creativity, in their self-representation as street artists and entertainers. In addition, I demonstrate and discuss the team nature of their events and the issues raised by their use of what I designate as 'hidden performers'.

⁶ Open Air Campaigners (GB) is the legal name for the organisation. The significance of the name 'change' will be discussed in chapter 6. Hereafter, OAC GB.

In chapter 7, I draw together a number of conclusions with respect to the theory, theology, and practice of open-air preaching, understood as radical street performance. I argue that radical street performance is a valuable, illuminating, and constructive approach for understanding this expression of Christian preaching, in performance terms. In addition, from the analysis, I suggest that the concepts of the incarnation and witness are particularly pertinent for theologically understanding the nature of open-air preaching. I also highlight several important features related to the practice of open-air preaching. These include the varied use of space and the importance of the preaching persona. While this research is in open-air preaching, I also highlight a number of the implications which it has for the dominant regular practice of in-church preaching. I do this from the perspective of the tense relationship that the research indicates exists between open-air and in-church preaching.⁷

⁷ A chapter entitled, 'Open-Air Preaching: Performing Beyond the Walls', based upon some of the research associated with this thesis is published in *Worship and Liturgy in Context: Studies and Case Studies of Contemporary Christian Practice*, ed. by Duncan B. Forrester and Doug Gay (London: SCM, 2009), 246-258.

Chapter 1: The Practice of Open-Air Preaching

1.1. Introduction

In this thesis, I am exploring the practice of open-air preaching in terms of radical street performance. This raises an immediate problem. The open air is not the regular context in which preaching in the Global North takes place and is experienced today. This is not to say that open-air preaching does not occur: it does, with several groups dedicated to its promotion.¹ It is rather to say, that it is a minority practice. Not only, however, is it a minority practice, it is also an activity commonly associated with negative stereotypes. These stereotypes are of angry, haranguing preachers, with little apparent real concern for passers-by. The comments by popular Christian author Brian McLaren, with open-air preaching clearly in mind, are typical, if searing:

On the street, evangelism is equated with pressure. It means selling God as if God were vinyl siding, replacement windows, or a mortgage refinancing service. It means shoving your ideas down someone's throat, threatening him with hell if he does not capitulate to your logic or Scripture-quoting. It means excluding everyone from God's grace except those who agree with the evangelizer (a.k.a. evangelist).²

With respect to homiletics, the negative view of open-air preaching, is given extra potency, in a socio-religious context, where the very nature and value of preaching itself is under scrutiny.³

Despite the minority status and negative stereotypes associated with open-air preaching, it is a practice with a long and diverse history. In this chapter, therefore, I introduce the core practice under consideration with reference to its long history and

¹ The practice of one of these groups, OAC GB, will be explored in detail in chapter 6.

² Brian D. McLaren, *More Ready Than You Realise: The Power of Everyday Conversations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), 14. This thesis is written using gender inclusive language, quotations, however, are left in their original form.

³ Stephen Wright, "The problems with "preaching"", in Geoffrey Stevenson and Stephen Wright, *Preaching With Humanity* (London: Church House Publishing, 2008), 1-11.

diverse nature. In this way, I challenge easy stereotypes, describe the variety and complexity of the practice, and define the particular type of open-air preaching which I am discussing. Having done this, I then discuss two types of literature with respect to their consideration of open-air preaching. The first I designate as 'literature of neglect'. This is a large body of contemporary, academic, homiletical literature. It is literature whose writers work with the apparently unquestioned assumptions that all preaching occurs within the context of a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly and accordingly neglect the practice of open-air preaching. The second type of literature, I designate as the 'literature of advocacy'. This literature is mainly older and less academic, although not exclusively so. Its writers are those who in various ways defend and promote open-air preaching. Through the discussion of this chapter, therefore, I introduce the core practice being explored contrary to easy stereotyping and position my research in relation to the wider study of preaching in general, and open-air preaching in particular.

1.2. Definitions and Descriptions

A survey of general homiletical literature indicates that contemporary reflection on preaching offers a wide range of definitions and descriptions.⁴ Despite the variety, however, preaching is commonly recognised to have a number of features. First it is an oral/aural event. Second it is presentational public speech. Third, it has content demonstrably shaped by the biblical text.⁵ Fourth, it is purposeful in being spoken to effect some sort of transformation.⁶ The general definition I propose, therefore, is

⁴ Michael J. Quicke suggests that part of the variety in homiletical literature can be attributed to the diversity of the practice as described in the New Testament with the consequence that '*preaching* is such a slippery word that almost anyone can construct a definition based on his or her personal experience and preference that can then be read back into favourite New Testament references', *360 Degree Preaching: Hearing, Speaking, and Living the Word* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), 26, italics Quicke.

⁵ John S. McClure argues that although it may be used in various ways, the use of Scripture is one of the features that constitute preaching as a particular genre of communication, *The Four Codes: Rhetorical Strategies* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003=1991), 9.

⁶ The transformational potential of preaching is often related to theological convictions regarding the operation of God in and through the preaching event, Quicke, *360 Degree*, 55-60. Some post-modern theories would emphasise the transformational nature of conversation, Paul Scott Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory* (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 66-67.

that Christian preaching is ‘the oral presentation of biblically informed Christian convictions, with the purpose of effecting some sort of change.’ Open-air preaching is such preaching outdoors. It is preaching which on account of its specific historical context or physical location, is sometimes referred to as ‘field’ or ‘street’ preaching.⁷

To simply describe open-air preaching as preaching which occurs in the open air, however, belies the long, diverse, and complicated nature of the practice. In this section, therefore, I will introduce something of the long and diverse nature of open-air preaching with reference to a variety of literature, including a number of histories of preaching. Through the discussion and description of the diverse nature of the practice, I will define as ‘missional’, the particular expression of open-air preaching which is the focus of my research.⁸ I am aware that in this discussion, while I refer to a number of different examples of open-air preaching, these are nonetheless limited and none are discussed in any great detail.⁹ The purpose of the discussion, however, is to introduce the core practice of open-air preaching through providing a sketch and survey of examples that are illustrative and sufficient to challenge overly simplistic stereotypes. The case studies, I explore later in the thesis, provide detailed, supportive analysis, of the discussion that takes place in this section.

1.2.1. A Long Tradition

Open-air preaching has a long history. Charles H. Spurgeon, a practitioner and advocate of open-air preaching, writing in the late nineteenth century, states:

⁷ I generally use the more generic and inclusive term of open-air preaching although where geographically appropriate will use ‘street preaching’ as synonymous reserving the term ‘field preaching’ for appropriate historical references. Different authors use the terms in different ways but often synonymously.

⁸ This is also the concern of Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell in their collaborative work, *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000) as demonstrated by Campbell in his essay ‘Street Preaching’, 95-107, where he also uses the term ‘missional’, 97. This book is one of few contemporary homiletical books that defends and advocates the practice of open-air preaching. Campbell offers a short discussion on the ‘long and lively tradition’ of open-air preaching which I refer to, but is different from my own, ‘Street’, 96-99.

⁹ I have concentrated primarily although not exclusively on examples from Europe and Britain in particular, in keeping with the localised nature of the case studies.

There are some customs for which nothing can be pleaded, except that they are very old. In such cases antiquity is of no more value than rust upon a counterfeit coin. It is, however, a happy circumstance when the usage of ages can be pleaded for a really good scriptural practice, for it invests it with a halo of reverence.¹⁰

As indicated in this quotation, one of the recurring claims made by various advocates for open-air preaching is that has a long history rooted in biblical practice.¹¹

Scriptural examples adduced in support of this claim, by such writers, include:

Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Amos, Jonah, Jesus, Peter, and Paul. It is a weakness of these writings that there is little scholarly discussion of the individual examples given.

Subsequently, there is little consideration of the specific reasons why these biblical characters preached in the open air or the nature of their audiences, such as whether they existed within or beyond the community of faith. The nature of the relationship between such earlier precursors, their significance, the nature of the practices they indicate, and later open-air activity, is not, therefore, discussed in detail. Despite these weaknesses, what these writers indicate through the examples which they give, is that open-air preaching, as with Christian preaching in general, has roots in practices that pre-date the formation of the New Testament. These practices include Hebrew prophecy, ancient oratory, and the proclamation of the gospel by Jesus and the apostles.¹²

The existence of biblical precursors, within the history of preaching in general, specifically for open-air preaching, is something recognised by Hughes Oliphant Old, the author of a recent multi-volume history of preaching, when he writes:

John the Baptist was not an institutional preacher who preached because society had given him that responsibility and had provided for him a parish, a pulpit, and a parsonage. John the Baptist was a charismatic preacher whom God's Spirit raised up as he had the prophets, to preach a unique message for a very particular

¹⁰ Charles H. Spurgeon, 'Open Air Preaching - A Sketch of its History', 54, in Charles H. Spurgeon, *Second Series of Lectures to My Students: Being Addresses Delivered to the Students of The Pastors College, Metropolitan Tabernacle* (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1881), 54-75. I will discuss the significance of Spurgeon as an advocate for open-air preaching later in the chapter.

¹¹ For example, Greville Ewing, *A Defence of Itinerant and Field Preaching: A Sermon Preached Before The Society for Gratis Sabbath Schools, On the 24th of December 1979, In Lady Glenorchy's Chapel, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1799) and Noel C. Gibson, *The Fisherman's Basket: Open-Air and Other Methods of Evangelism* (NSW: Mission Publications, 1984), 89-94.

¹² These influences on the practice of preaching in general, as well as others such as synagogue preaching, are regularly referred to by authors in discussing the origins of Christian preaching in general. These three are discussed together by Edwin C. Dargan, *A History of Preaching: From the Apostolic Fathers to the great Reformers A.D. 70-1572*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968=1905), 14-25.

time. Like the Methodists and the Franciscans, like the hermit preachers in the Eastern Orthodox churches, like the Pentecostal preachers of today, John the Baptist preached out-of doors. He preached in the wilderness and people went out to hear him. The voice crying in the wilderness was a very special kind of preaching, and John the Baptist is the biblical figure for this kind of preaching. The voice crying in the wilderness has a special intensity because it is called forth directly by the Holy Spirit. It came from the white-hot burning bush of God's presence. Jesus too, was a charismatic preacher, a voice crying in the wilderness. Jesus could preach in the marketplace, on the mountainside, and beside the sea. Not everyone could do that. It takes a special charisma. Jesus could do it as John the Baptist could.¹³

In this statement, Old, identifies open-air preaching as a particular expression of Christian preaching. It is not the dominant expression of preaching which for Old is preaching which occurs in the context of worship and constitutes the primary focus of his study.¹⁴ In its peculiarity, however, Old posits open-air preaching as a significant expression of Christian preaching, with varied historic manifestation, rooted in the prophetic tradition, and mediated through John the Baptist and Jesus into contemporary Christian practice. The importance of the disruptively prophetic preaching of John the Baptist and Jesus, as paradigmatic for open-air preaching, is also highlighted by Charles L. Campbell, the Peter Marshall Professor of Homiletics at Columbia Theological Seminary, in his essay on 'Street Preaching'.¹⁵ Not all histories of Christian preaching begin with the Scriptural narratives and practice.¹⁶ Those which do, however, and posit Jesus and other biblical characters as in any way paradigmatic, have to contend with the fact that Jesus and other biblical characters such as John the Baptist, Peter, and Paul, preached outdoors.¹⁷

As indicated above, open-air preaching not only has its roots in practices attested in the Scriptures but subsequently is an activity which has manifested itself in various ways throughout history. This is demonstrated, albeit again at times without detailed

¹³ Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church: The Biblical Period*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998), 115.

¹⁴ Old, *Reading*, vol. 1, 3-4.

¹⁵ Campbell, 'Street', 97 and 104.

¹⁶ Edwards argues that there is little in the New Testament including in the practice of Jesus that fits his definition of preaching, *History*, 5-8 and begins his study with reference to a second century description of a worship service by Justin Martyr and a second century sermon from the Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, *History*, 14-15.

¹⁷ Ronald E. Osborn, *Folly of God: The Rise of Christian Preaching: A History of Christian Preaching*, vol. 1 (St Louis: Chalice Press, 1999), 26 and 189.

discussion or discernment, in sketches provided by the advocates of the practice.¹⁸ Unlike preaching in general, however, there is no specific contemporary historical overview of open-air preaching.¹⁹ To be sure, the general preaching histories refer to prominent examples of open-air preaching. In this way they provide a useful secondary source. Be this as it may, they frequently do not treat open-air preaching as a specific genre. Rather, they subsume it under the dominant historical practice of preaching which is preaching that has taken place in the context of liturgical assembly. A prominent example of this is O. C. Edwards Jr., in *A History of Preaching*, where his definition of preaching is:

a speech delivered in a Christian assembly for worship by an authorized person that applies some point of doctrine, usually drawn from a biblical passage, to the lives of the members of the congregation with the purpose of moving them by use of narrative analogy and other rhetorical devices to accept that application and to act on the basis of it.²⁰

Having given this definition, he acknowledges the existence of evangelistic and open-air preaching but then argues that even these ‘exceptions’ nearly always occurred within the context of worship.²¹ One consequence of this approach to the historical expressions of open-air preaching is to neglect the specific dynamics and contribution of the practice throughout history. Another consequence is to prevent the practice of open-air preaching challenging the pre-determined dominant understanding of preaching as that event which occurs within the context of a congregation gathered in worship.²²

One older history of preaching, however, where the author spends some time discussing the specific significance of open-air preaching, albeit still in a limited

¹⁸ Spurgeon’s ‘Sketch’ remains one of the most comprehensive sketches available.

¹⁹ Edwin C. Dargan, *A History of Preaching: From the Apostolic Fathers to the 20th Century*, 2 vols (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968-70 = 1905); Clyde E. Fant and William M. Pinson, *20 Centuries of Great Preaching*, 12 vols (Waco: Word Books, 1971); Ronald E. Osborn, *Folly of God: The Rise of Christian Preaching: A History of Christian Preaching*, vol. 1 (St Louis: Chalice Press, 1999); David Dunn-Wilson, *A Mirror for the Church: Preaching in the First Five Centuries* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005); Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures: In the Worship of the Christian Church*, 6 vols (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998-2007).

²⁰ O. C. Edwards, *A History of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004), 3-4.

²¹ Edwards, *History*, 4.

²² This neglect by exclusive definition is also obvious in the shorter history by Yngve Brilioth, *A Brief History of Preaching*, trans. Karl E. Mattson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965).

way, is the three volume work by F.R. Webber, *A History of Preaching In Britain and America*.²³ Webber discusses open-air preaching because of his conviction that great preaching should include the ability to present ‘evangelical truth clearly’.²⁴ In this discussion, he argues that the open-air preaching of John Wesley (1703-1791) and George Whitefield (1714-1770) was part of a long although forgotten historic tradition of open-air preaching. In turn, he contends that its expression created a new interest in preaching and infused ‘new life’ into the practice of preaching in the eighteenth century.²⁵ This work has additional geographical interest in that Webber gives a significant proportion of his study, to preaching in Scotland. In his first volume he discusses ‘Celtic’ preaching, including that which took place in Scotland.²⁶ He also allocates the majority of his second volume to preaching in Scotland.²⁷ As he proceeds in this second volume, he refers to a number of Scottish examples of preaching that took place outdoors. This includes a minor and secondary reference to the open-air preaching of James Haldane.²⁸ Webber draws upon earlier works on Scottish preaching as sources for this discussion.²⁹ These earlier works do not offer analytical discussion on the nature of open-air preaching as a genre although they describe specific examples.³⁰ These examples, however, are at least illustrative of the long and varied history of the practice in Scotland.

As indicated in the preceding discussion, therefore, the history of open-air preaching is one which has to be drawn from a variety of sources. The writings of advocates demonstrate the longevity of the practice but often lack considered detail and

²³ F.R. Webber, *History of Preaching In Britain and America: Including the Biographies of Many Princes of the Pulpit and the Men Who Influenced Them*, 3 vols (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1952-1957).

²⁴ Webber, *History*, vol. 1, 17.

²⁵ Webber, *History*, vol. 1, 322, 329-331.

²⁶ Webber, *History*, vol. 1, 29-128.

²⁷ Webber, *History*, vol. 2.

²⁸ Webber, *History*, vol. 2, 203.

²⁹ William M. Taylor, *The Scottish Pulpit: From the Reformation to the Present Day* (Birmingham: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2004=1887); William Garden Blaikie, *The Preachers of Scotland: From the Sixth to the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888).

³⁰ For Taylor on John Livingstone’s open-air communion service in 1630 and on the ‘field-preaching of the Covenanters, see *Scottish*, 94-99 and 124-138 respectively. For Blaikie on the ‘field-preaching’ of the Covenanters, see *Preachers*, 155-184.

discussion. On the other hand, more general histories of preaching often obscure the particular nature of open-air preaching. Together, however, the sources, as discussed, indicate that open-air preaching has a long and varied history. Drawing further on these and other sources, I will now discuss and describe more fully the diverse and complex nature of the historic practice of open-air preaching.

1.2.2. A Diverse Tradition

In addition to having a long and significant history, open-air preaching is also of diverse rendition. This diversity is not simply related to the historical socio-cultural context in which it occurred, although this is clearly important. Rather, each open-air preaching event is constituted by the dynamic and varied interaction of a number of factors within its context. In order, therefore, to demonstrate the diverse and complex nature of open-air preaching, over and against simplistic stereotyping, I will discuss a number of the factors operative in determining the specific nature of any particular open-air preaching event. I will do this with reference to historic and contemporary examples. At the conclusion of this discussion, I will consider the issue of motivation and define the specific nature of the open-air preaching which I am exploring in this thesis as missional open-air preaching.

1.2.2.1. The Status of Preachers

One differentiating factor in the historic practice of open-air preaching is the status of the participants. This is the case particularly in terms of their relationship to the dominant authorities and social norms of their time. On occasions open-air preachers have been people recognised, trained, and authorised, by the dominant authorities.³¹ Such for example was the case in thirteenth century Europe, with the establishment of mendicant orders including the Franciscan and Dominican orders of 'Preaching

³¹ In the Medieval Roman Catholic Church only Bishops could preach by right, priests, members of monastic orders, and mendicant friars required legitimising authority, *Edwards*, 215-217.

Brothers'.³² On the other hand, however, there were the open-air preachers of the Waldenses and Cathars. These were the people whom the 'preaching friars' were formed in part to counteract. They consisted of those who were considered 'heretical', were 'unlicensed', and contrary to established norms included in their number both lay people and women.³³ Of course the significance of the status of open-air preachers in relation to the authorities of church and state correlates to the particular historical context. It is simply not the case that in every situation having irregular preachers can be regarded as threatening the norms of society, as for example did the preaching of the Lollards.³⁴ Nor is it the case that the tension between un-authorised open-air preachers and authorities has always had the political significance and threat of bloodshed that it had at times of reform and Reformation. Such was the case for example, with the open-air preaching of George Wishart (1513-1546) during the Reformation in Scotland.³⁵ Historically, however, open-air preaching has been one of the more democratic forms of preaching in terms of those permitted to participate not least with respect to lay people and women.³⁶ This irregular feature of its activity can help explain the association of open-air preaching with times of reform and renewal.³⁷ The significance of the status of the open-air preachers will form part of the discussion in the later case studies.

³² Edwards, *History*, 212-217. This validation of course could be viewed as the domestication of the practice since these orders preached in the open air prior to validation. This notwithstanding the general contrast being made stands.

³³ Edwards, *History*, 212-217. For a discussion of women preaching in these groups and reactions to them, Beverly Mayne Kienzle, 'The Prostitute-preacher: Patterns of Polemic against Medieval Waldensian Women Preachers', in *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity* ed. by Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker (London: University of California Press, 1998), 99-113, and Anne Breton, 'The Voice of Good Women: An Essay on the Pastoral and Sacerdotal Role of Women in the Cathar Church', Kienzle and Walker, *Women*, 114-133.

³⁴ G.R. Owst, *Preaching in Medieval England: An Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period, c. 1350-1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926), 54. Who the Lollards were, the nature of their beliefs, and their precise association to John Wyclif, are all matters of debate. Andrew E. Larsen says that the description refers to 'someone in the period after 1377 who shares a significant number of beliefs associated with John Wyclif and his identifiable followers', 'Are All Lollards Lollards?', in *Lollards and their Influence: In Late Medieval England*, ed. by Fiona Somerset, Jill C. Havens, and Derrick G. Pittard (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003), 59-72, 69.

³⁵ Charles Rogers, 'Memoir of George Wishart, the Scottish Martyr. With His Translation of the Helvetian Confession, and a Gene-Alogical History of the Family of Wishart', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4 (1876), 278-280.

³⁶ Campbell, 'Street', 105.

³⁷ Campbell, 'Street', 105.

1.2.2.2. Specific Locations

Another factor establishing variety in open-air preaching is the specific locations used for preaching and the significance of those locations. By way of example, therefore, in Reformation and post-Reformation England, there is the contrast between itinerant ‘Lollard’ preachers who would preach wherever they could gather an audience,³⁸ William Tyndale (1494-1536), preaching ‘on the College Green at Bristol’,³⁹ Miles Coverdale (1488-1569), preaching on the field after a battle,⁴⁰ Hugh Latimer (1485-1555), preaching at the official open air pulpit at St Paul’s Cross,⁴¹ and Archbishop William Laud (1573-1644), preaching from the scaffold on Tower Hill prior to his execution.⁴² All of these people preached in the open air. The locations, however, varied considerably, as in turn would the gathered listeners and their expectations as related to these specific locations.

Following on from the above, the significance of locations as a space for open-air preaching can change, while retaining associations with earlier usage. St Paul’s Cross was originally established at the entrance of a burial ground to remind people to pray. It then became a place of public proclamation, developing in significance until during the period of the English Reformation, its pulpit became ‘nothing less than the popular voice of the Church of England, during the most turbulent and

³⁸ Edwards, *History*, 254.

³⁹ The reference to Tyndale preaching in the open air in Bristol and surrounding area is mentioned in a number of works: J. F. Mozley, *William Tyndale* (London: SPCK, 1937), 24-25; C. H. Williams, *William Tyndale* (London: Nelson, 1969), 11; Brian Moynahan, *William Tyndale: If God Spare My Life* (London: Abacus, 2003), 24. It is a claim based primarily upon a sentence in John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, see (1570 edition) [online version], 1225, http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/main/8_1570_1225.jsp, accessed, 6/7/09.

⁴⁰ Dargan, without giving much detail mentions the itinerant evangelising of Coverdale, *History*, vol. 1, 486. There is, however, a reference to him preaching in a field after a battle in 1549 while serving as chaplain to Lord Russell, ‘Miles Coverdale (1488-1569)’, David Nash Ford’s, *Royal Berkshire History*, <http://www.berkshirehistory.com/bios/mcoverdale.html>, accessed 02/04/2007.

⁴¹ For the recollections of Thomas Dorset, the curate of St Margaret’s Lothbury, writing to the Mayor of Plymouth on the 13th March 1536 on Latimer’s preaching at St. Paul’s Cross, taken from *State Papers: Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII*, X. 462, see Harold S. Darby, *Hugh Latimer* (London: Epworth Press, 1953), 115.

⁴² ‘The Speech of the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, 447, spoken at his Death, upon the Scaffold of the Tower-hill, Jan 10, 1644’, in *The Works of William Laud*, vol. 4, ed. by James Bliss (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1854), 430-440. This speech also known as his ‘Funeral Sermon’ was published a few days after his death, William Holden Hutton, *William Laud* (London: Methuen & Co, 1895), 224.

creative period in her history'.⁴³ Likewise, after Tower Hill was no longer used for executions, it remained a place of public gathering and has continued to be a site for open-air events. Consequently, it was one of the regular preaching places of the well known twentieth-century open-air preacher, Lord Donald Soper (1903-1998).⁴⁴ The specific nature and significance of particular locations, therefore, is one of the factors that distinguish different expressions of open-air preaching. This in turn is related in various degrees to other features such as occasion, the status of the preacher, and the purpose and content of the preaching, in constituting the particular dynamics of any one open-air preaching event.

1.2.2.3. Content and Purpose

As indicated above, another factor that brings diversity to open-air preaching events is variety in content and purpose. In this respect, since the eighteenth century revivalist preaching of Wesley and Whitefield, open-air preaching has been widely associated with evangelism understood as promoting a message of personal salvation.⁴⁵ Much subsequent open-air preaching has certainly been of this nature with later practitioners often appealing to the example and success of Wesley and Whitefield.⁴⁶ Two of the later case studies will explore two different expressions of such evangelistic open-air preaching. More, however, requires to be said about the historical variety of content and purpose in open-air preaching.

⁴³ Millar McClure, *The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958), 167. McClure's study offers insight to the nature, significance, style and variety of the preaching which took place in this officially sanctioned location prior to its destruction under Puritan reaction against such decorations associated with churches.

⁴⁴ For a description of Soper's introduction to and success at open-air preaching at Tower Hill, Brian Frost, *Goodwill on Fire: Donald Soper's Life and Mission* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996), 25-45. For a more detailed academic study of Soper's open-air rhetoric which includes discussion of his activities at Tower Hill and the significance of the location, George Gill Hunter III, 'Evangelistic Rhetoric in Secular Britain: The Theory and Speaking of Donald Soper and Bryan Green' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Evanston, Illinois, 1972).

⁴⁵ The beginning of 'Revival' in Wales and the open-air preaching of Howell Harris (1714-1733) preceded that associated with Whitefield and Wesley although less widely known and discussed. It is worthy of consideration in its own right and would demonstrate variety not least in matters of personality between a number of the leading figures. See on this, Derec Llwyd Morgan, *The Great Awakening in Wales*, trans. by Dyfnallt Morgan (London: Epworth Press, 1988).

⁴⁶ For example, Godfrey Holden Pike, *Beneath the Blue Sky: Preaching in the Open-Air* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888), 183-209; *Open-Air Evangelism Training Manual* (Manchester: OAC, 2006), 10.

First, Wesley and Whitefield do not offer a uniform example of evangelistic open-air preaching. They had distinct theologies, their respective Arminian and Calvinistic convictions creating discord between them.⁴⁷ They also had different styles. Horton Davies, who in a variety of ways, with reference to sermon texts, compares and contrasts Wesley and Whitefield opines, ‘Whitefield was ever the orator, Wesley always the don’, and again, ‘Whitefield was the spell-binding orator and preacher par excellence, while Wesley was the best of pulpit preachers’.⁴⁸ Their preaching had various shared and different social and religious consequences with respect to its outdoor nature, their respective relationships with church authorities, those whom they reached, and in Wesley’s case, the movement which he left behind.⁴⁹ In addition the preaching of Wesley in particular has been associated with social reform in respect to issues of poverty, slavery, and alcohol abuse.⁵⁰ Old writes:

The gin shop was the curse of the Industrial Revolution...That Wesley and the Evangelical Revival generally should have preached so often against the evils of drink was for that time prophetic.⁵¹

One writer, albeit without substantiation, claims that Wesley’s influence was responsible for decline in the consumption of alcohol between 1744 and 1784.⁵² As with open-air preaching in general, so in particular, the open-air preaching of Wesley and Whitefield cannot be reduced to a simple evangelical type in content and purpose.

Second, open-air preaching both prior and subsequent to Whitefield and Wesley, has had a range of content and purposes beyond seeking personal salvation. During the

⁴⁷ Ted A. Campbell, *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1991), 125-127.

⁴⁸ Horton Davies, *Worship and Theology in England: From Watts to Wesley to Maurice, 1690-1850*, vol. 3 (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1961), 160 and 172.

⁴⁹ Clyde E. Fant and William M. Pinson, *20 Centuries of Great Preaching: Wesley to Finney*, vol. 3 (Waco: Word, 1991), 2-14 and 107-118 for an accessible comparison of biography and preaching.

⁵⁰ D.D. Thompson, *John Wesley as a Social Reformer* (New York: Curts & Jennings, 1998); Fant and Pinson, *20 Centuries*, vol. 3, 7-10; Dr Sondra Wheeler, Professor of Theological Ethics at Wesley Theological Seminary, produced in 2002, for ‘The Lived Theology and Power Workgroup’ as part of the ‘The Project on Lived Theology’ from Virginia University’, and called, ‘John Wesley and “Social Ethics”’ can be found at, http://www.livedtheology.org/wkgrp_power_4.htm, accessed, 12/4/07.

⁵¹ Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures In the Worship of the Christian Church: Moderatism, Pietism, and Awakening*, vol. 5 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2004), 135.

⁵² Fant and Pinson, *20 Centuries*, vol. 3, 8.

thirteenth century, for example, the mendicant friars were used by the papacy as a 'propaganda machine', to 'preach the cross', with the explicit purpose of getting people to support the Crusades either in person or financially.⁵³ Later, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, such itinerant preachers as a result of their exposure to the needs of the common people were at times instrumental in declaring abuses and stirring people to action. In this respect G.R. Owst on the basis of the analysis of sermons from c1350-1450, claims that the preaching friars were preachers of political and social as well as religious reform.⁵⁴ He states:

In politics, behind the throng of noisy rebels and discontents, whether the rebellion of Simon de Montford, the Peasant Revolt, or the risings which follow the disposition of Richard II, we catch glimpses of passionate eloquent friars stirring men on to resist tyranny or the usurpation which mars the hour.⁵⁵

In relation to this matter of content and purpose, Campbell in his essay on open-air preaching, refers to historical examples such as St Francis of Assisi (c.1181-1226), Girolamo Savonarola (1452-1498), and also to more contemporary expressions including the Salvation Army, the Roman Catholic Vincentian motor mission, people involved in Civil Rights activities, and volunteers such as himself with the Open Door community in Atlanta. He refers to these preachers to illustrate the fact that beyond a concern for personal salvation, open-air preaching has had the purposes of: 'Reform', 'Reconciliation', 'Resistance' and 'Solidarity' with the poor.⁵⁶ In terms of theological variety, Campbell's own open-air preaching is interesting, not least because it is a post-liberal expression of preaching beyond the context of the cultural-linguistic congregational community.⁵⁷

Third, an evangelical passion in the tradition of Whitefield and Wesley need not necessitate a particular narrow content or purpose. A significant British example of an open-air preacher with a breadth of content and purpose is the previously mentioned Donald Soper. Soper was perhaps one of the best known English open-air

⁵³ Christopher T. Maier, *Preaching the Crusades: The Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 32.

⁵⁴ Owst, *Preaching*, 80.

⁵⁵ Owst, *Preaching*, 55-56.

⁵⁶ Campbell, 'Street', 96-103.

⁵⁷ Robert Stephen Reid, *The Four Voices of Preaching: Connecting Purpose and Identity Behind the Pulpit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006), 179, footnote 48.

preachers of the late twentieth century. A Methodist minister, he always understood himself to be one of 'John Wesley's travelling preachers'.⁵⁸ He was an advocate for open-air preaching stating, 'It is an art which should be recovered and an opportunity which we dare not lose'.⁵⁹ He spoke on a huge range of social and political issues including pacifism. He considered such preaching to be 'pre-evangelistic and apologetic'.⁶⁰ Indeed, he suggested that to ask about the number of converts was not to understand the nature of open-air preaching.⁶¹ That said, Soper was a man with an evangelistic concern and there were converts through his open-air preaching.⁶² My case study of Soper's Scottish contemporary, George F. MacLeod, will also highlight an open-air preacher with a breadth of content and purpose in his open-air preaching.

1.2.2.4. *Relationship to Worship*

In addition to the status of the preacher, the location of the event, the content and purposes of the preaching, a further factor of differentiation in open-air preaching has been the relationship of the preaching to other acts of worship. On some occasions open-air preaching has been embedded in acts of liturgical assembly. Historically this was the case in the Medieval period when the gatherings at which open-air preaching took place were constituted by the Liturgical Calendar.⁶³ It was also the case with the preaching in the open air that accompanied Scottish open-air Communion Services and the 'field preaching' of the Covenanters.⁶⁴ Preaching in the open air, as part of outdoor church worship services remains one expression of the practice.⁶⁵

⁵⁸ Frost, *Goodwill*, 221.

⁵⁹ Donald Soper, *Advocacy of the Gospel* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961), 64.

⁶⁰ Frost, *Goodwill*, 107.

⁶¹ Soper, *Advocacy*, 81.

⁶² Frost, *Goodwill*, 107.

⁶³ Owst, *Preaching*, 194-221.

⁶⁴ On open-air communion services, Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy Fairs: Scottish Communion Services and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), and on the 'field preaching' of the Covenanters, Blaikie, *Preachers*, 155-184.

⁶⁵ Both my own town of Kirkintilloch and nearby Lenzie, have annual open-air ecumenical services at which preaching takes place.

On other occasions, the relationship between open-air preaching and accompanying acts of worship has been more ambiguous. Thus for example, the open-air preaching at St Paul's Cross was accompanied by customary opening and closing prayers and for some time by congregational-psalm singing.⁶⁶ On behalf of the organisers this may have constituted the assembly as an act of worship. Yet, allowing for the variety of motives and interests associated with the 'spectacle' of particular preaching stations, questions must be raised as to whether those who gathered can be said to have been a congregation in worship.⁶⁷ In turn, Wesley and Whitefield may have accompanied their preaching with prayer and hymn singing but the audiences they preached to were not necessarily congregations.⁶⁸ At times these preachers would go to locations where they would seek to gather audiences out of passers-by and or actively compete for the attention of people over and against other attractions of leisure and entertainment. As a result of this, Harry S. Stout, Professor of History at Yale Divinity School writes about Whitefield creating a 'hybrid' gathering that was neither, 'sacred or profane'.⁶⁹ The ambiguity in relationship that can exist between open-air preaching and other acts of worship is demonstrated also in some of the early literature associated with the Open-Air Mission formed in 1853.⁷⁰ Writing in 1855, its founder John MacGregor, in a pamphlet entitled, *Go Out Quickly*, distinguished clearly between a '*worshipping congregation* and a *listening crowd*'.⁷¹ Having done so, he argues that acts of worship such as hymn singing can be dispensed with and 'prayer very briefly employed; more, in fact to gather the audience, and to show the spirit of the work, than to conduct the praise or petitions of those who attend'.⁷² Following on from this, although Gawin Kirkham, who became secretary of the Open-Air Mission in 1860, allowed for hymn singing to take place, he understood such and similar acts to function as 'attractions' that can gather a

⁶⁶ MacLure, *St Paul's*, 9.

⁶⁷ MacLure, *St Paul's*, 8.

⁶⁸ Old, *Reading*, vol. 5, 113-114 on Wesley; Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1991), 79, on Whitefield.

⁶⁹ Stout, *Divine*, 68.

⁷⁰ The Open-Air Mission is a group that continues to exist and promote open-air preaching, www.oamission.com, accessed, 30/6/08.

⁷¹ John MacGregor, *Go Out Quickly* (London: Blackburn and Burt, 1855), 5, italics MacGregor.

⁷² MacGregor, *Go*, 5.

crowd.⁷³ A similar understanding of function, with more intentional theatrics, can be attributed to the acts and actions that accompanied the open-air preaching of the Salvation Army, formed in 1865. Writing about the activities of the Salvation Army in the 1880s, Pamela J. Walker states:

Unlike virtually any of their contemporaries, Salvationists appealed to working-class audiences by borrowing some of the elements of working class culture with a real appreciation of their attractions. The brass bands, music-hall songs, street performances, and daring women all appealed to the senses. The use of such cultural elements was widely called sensationalism.⁷⁴

The accompaniment of open-air preaching with what may be perceived in other contexts as liturgical acts, therefore, does not mean that they functioned as such in the open air or that the gatherings constituted a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly.

Open-air preaching can also occur apart from any other acts of worship. Soper preached at Tower Hill and Hyde Park without any accompanying worship. He did not in any way assume that he would be addressing a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly. In a published lecture on open-air preaching he states that:

It begins in the recognition that you are there to be shot at. You are there to stand your corner, and to state your case, under conditions where you enjoy nothing of the privilege that normally you can enjoy in the dugout of the pulpit or escape hatch of the vestry.⁷⁵

Furthermore, in the same lecture he argues that unless open-air services are large enough to take on the nature of a demonstration, then they can be ‘pathetic’ and harmful to the gospel.⁷⁶ Accordingly, he considered that his own preaching took place in a ‘secular’ rather than ‘spiritual’ environment.⁷⁷ The relationship, therefore, of open-air preaching to other attendant acts of worship has varied considerably. This variety and some creative improvisation in this regard will be apparent in the open-air preaching explored in the case studies as radical street performance.

⁷³ Gawin Kirkham, ‘Hints for Beginners’ in *Beneath the Blue Sky: Preaching in the Open-Air* by Godfrey Holden Pike (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888), 64-65.

⁷⁴ Pamela J. Walker, *Pulling The Devil’s Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 198. This book is particularly helpful in highlighting the role of women in the Salvation Army, including in preaching both indoors and in the open air.

⁷⁵ Soper, *Advocacy*, 72.

⁷⁶ Soper, *Advocacy*, 65.

⁷⁷ Soper, *Advocacy*, 65.

1.2.2.5. Motivation

The preceding discussion on the various factors that determine the dynamics and diverse nature of open-air preaching already indicates that people have preached outdoors for a number of reasons. Sometimes it has been an enforced necessity. This may be due to preachers, on theological grounds, being denied freedom, recognition, buildings, and pulpits by the dominant church authorities. In Scotland this has been the case at diverse times for the likes of sixteenth century Reformers, post-Reformation Roman Catholics, seventeenth century Covenanters, and preachers involved in times of 'Secession' and 'Disruption'.⁷⁸ At other times, the reasons have been more practical. These include holding services such as Communion services in the open air to accommodate the large numbers who wished to attend.⁷⁹ Reasons could also be mundane. Webber recounts the occasion when Duncan Macpherson (c.1711-1757), preached on the banks of the River Spey to members of the congregation on the other side because they could not cross to their place of worship because the river was in full spate.⁸⁰

For some preachers, however, whatever other factors and reasons have been involved, their driving motivation has been 'missional'. They have intentionally gone to the open air as public space, where people could be found, in order to preach particularly among those perceived to be beyond the reach of regular worship services. In such a complex activity as open-air preaching, missional motivation may be related to other attendant dynamics such as the size of audiences. Its presence, therefore, requires to be established in each instance. In general terms, however, it has been a motivation associated with a large number of the historically significant open-air preachers including Celtic missionaries,⁸¹ the preaching friars,⁸² revivalist

⁷⁸ J. A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, vol. 3 (London: Cassell, Peter, Galpin, 1877), 488; 'Historic Catholic Sites', [n.d.] provided by the Scottish Catholic Archives, 13/3/08, in response to an e-mail enquiry by author regarding Roman Catholic open-air preaching in Scotland; Webber, *History*, vol. 2, 107-146, 177, 262, 267, 315, 317.

⁷⁹ Schmidt, *Holy Fairs*, 11-50.

⁸⁰ Webber, *History* vol. 2, 197.

⁸¹ Webber, *History* vol. 1, 29-108.

⁸² Something of the missionary nature of these preachers is indicated not least in the thirteenth century work by Humbert of Romans, (c. 1200-1277) entitled 'Treatise on the Formation of Preachers' and in particular the section on 'Things Involved in Good Performance', contained in *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings*, ed. by Simon Tugwell (London: SPCK, 1982), 183-370, in particular, 253-256.

preachers such as Wesley and Whitefield,⁸³ and such groups as the Salvation Army,⁸⁴ to give but a few examples.

It is this expression of missional open-air preaching which is the focus of my research. I acknowledge that this definition of missional, rather than helping, may simply reinforce stereotypical understandings of open-air preachers ‘screaming the gospel’ at careworn shoppers thus epitomizing ‘what many find difficult and counter-intuitive about the very idea of preaching’.⁸⁵ Such preachers may be included in this type. From the preceding discussion, however, it should be apparent that the definition is to do with motivation, direction, and location, rather than any particular style or content. It refers to open-air preaching that takes place in the open air because the preachers are motivated to go to people, particularly those who do not normally attend church worship, where they are to be found. The three case studies of James Haldane, George F. MacLeod, and OAC GB, are all of this type.

Contrary to simplistic stereotypes, therefore, open-air preaching has a long and significant history enacted with considerable diversity. This is created as each open-air preaching event consists of a dynamic interaction of variable factors. This is true, indeed, even of the stereotypes which are, in turn, part of a long and multifarious tradition. Within this tradition, one factor of differentiation shared by a number of expressions is a missional motivation. It is this type of open-air preaching that is the focus of my research into open-air preaching as radical street performance. Having thus described the long and varied nature of the practice, and defined the particular

⁸³ Wesley was encouraged to participate in open-air preaching by Whitefield and describes his first engagement in open-air preaching where he ‘proclaimed in the highways the glad tidings of salvation’ in his *Journal* entry for Monday 2nd April, 1739, *The Works of John Wesley, Journal and Diaries II (1738-1743)*, vol. 19, ed. by W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990), 46. Whitefield explains his engagement in open-air preaching with reference to the example of Jesus and the sending of such of his followers into the ‘highways and hedges’, from a manuscript of Whitefield contained in John Gillies, *Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M.A.* (Salem: Cushing and Appleton, 1801), 22.

⁸⁴ Roy Hattersley, *Blood and Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army* (London: Abacus, 1999); Pamela J. Walker, *Pulling The Devil’s Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Roger J. Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005). All indicate the missional nature of Salvation Army open-air preaching.

⁸⁵ Wright, ‘The problems’, 1.

expression of open-air preaching which is the subject of this research, I will now discuss the way in which open-air preaching is treated in homiletical literature.

1.3. Literature of Neglect

A survey of general homiletical literature demonstrates that open-air preaching is an activity largely neglected by many writers. Consequently, I have designated this literature, a 'literature of neglect'. The reason for this neglect is that the writers concentrate on the regular practice of preaching, which takes place in the context of a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly. This in turn, is the assumed context in relation to which they carry out their thinking, theorising, and theologising about the practice of preaching in general. The neglect, therefore, is understandable. It is not, however, unproblematic either for open-air preaching or in-church preaching.

1.3.1. The Dominant Assumption regarding the context in which Preaching Occurs

The regular context in which preaching occurs and is experienced today in the Global North, is in the context of a congregation gathered in a building for worship. It is understandable, therefore, that this is the dominant assumption that undergirds the vast majority of contemporary homiletical writing. That this is the case, across a wide range of ecclesiastical traditions and perspectives is demonstrated by a survey of homiletical literature. Walter J. Burghardt, in *Preaching: The Art and The Craft*, posits preaching as a 'liturgical homily'.⁸⁶ Donald Coggan, in *The Sacrament of the Word*, suggests that the worshipping congregation is an important feature in what he defines as preaching.⁸⁷ Neville Clark, *Preaching in Context: Word, Worship and the People of God*, states that preaching 'is biblically based, liturgically rooted,

⁸⁶ Walter J. Burghardt, *Preaching: The Art and the Craft* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), particularly, 6-10 and 108-118.

⁸⁷ Donald Coggan, *The Sacrament of the Word* (London: Fount, 1987), 79-86.

congregationally aimed, and theologically controlled'.⁸⁸ Gerd Theissen, in *The Sign Language of Faith*, gives as the fifth dimension of preaching that:

It is public discourse in the framework of worship, in which a member of the community attempts to formulate the foundations of its common life as a representative of all its members.⁸⁹

In turn, Donald English, *An Evangelical Theology of Preaching*, locates what he means by preaching, including evangelistic preaching, in the context of worship where God is present with his people.⁹⁰ Nigel J. Robb, *The Preaching Triangle*, considers that one side of the triangle which constitutes preaching is the 'hearers' by which he means those gathered in worship.⁹¹ Brian Galliers, *Variety in Preaching*, despite claiming Donald Soper as an important part of his Methodist tradition, discusses variety in preaching with the clear assumption that preaching is something that takes place in the context of a worshipping congregation.⁹² Jane V. Craske, *A Woman's Perspective on Preaching*, situates preaching in 'the whole act of worship'.⁹³ Alice P. Matthews assumes throughout, that *Preaching That Speaks to Women* will take place in the context of liturgical assembly.⁹⁴ According to Michael J. Quicke, *360 Degree Preaching*, 'a congregation drawn together by God to participate in worship', is a necessary requirement for preaching to be 'authentic'.⁹⁵ Likewise, Thomas G. Long, in *The Witness of Preaching*, lists the congregation assembled for worship as the first of his 'crucial ingredients of preaching'.⁹⁶ Robert Stephen Reid, *The Four Voices of Preaching*, writes with the image of a pastor preaching to parishioners in mind.⁹⁷ Paul Scott Wilson, in *The Practice of Preaching*,

⁸⁸ Neville Clark, *Preaching in Context: Word, Worship and the People of God* (Suffolk: Kevin Mayhew, 1991), 22.

⁸⁹ Gerd Theissen, *The Sign Language of Faith* (London: SCM Press, 1995), 9-10.

⁹⁰ Donald English, *An Evangelical Theology of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 16.

⁹¹ Nigel J. Robb, *The Preaching Triangle* (Edinburgh: The Ministry Department of the Church of Scotland, 1999), 10-14,

⁹² Brian Galliers, *Variety in Preaching*, The Preachers Library, vol. 3 (Foundery Press: Peterborough, 2000), 3.

⁹³ Jane V. Craske, *A Woman's Perspective on Preaching*, The Preacher's Library vol. 5 (Peterborough: Foundery Press, 2001), 9.

⁹⁴ Alice P. Matthews, *Preaching That Speaks to Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003).

⁹⁵ Quicke, *360 Degree*, 60-62.

⁹⁶ Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 2nd edn (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005), 15-16.

⁹⁷ Reid, *Four Voices*, 33.

anticipates a congregation gathered in worship with the Bible at the centre.⁹⁸ Finally, Geoffrey Stevenson and Stephen Wright, *Preaching with Humanity*, explicitly state that they are concerned with “‘preaching’ within the context of regular Christian worship’.⁹⁹ This survey is not exhaustive. It is illustrative that much contemporary, academic, homelitical literature, is written from the perspective that preaching is an act that occurs within the context of a congregation gathered in worship.¹⁰⁰

1.3.2. The Advantages of Understanding Preaching as a Practice that occurs within the context of Liturgical Assembly

While I am exploring open-air preaching as radical street performance, I do not deny that most preaching to-day takes place in the context of a congregation gathered in worship. I also recognise that working on this assumption has a number of advantages for writers, allowing them to develop the practice, theory, and theology of preaching, in a number of ways pertinent to the regular situation. One way in which this can be done as by David M. Greenhaw and Ronald J. Allen, *Preaching in the Context of Worship*, is to understand preaching as an integrated partner in the event of worship.¹⁰¹ In turn, special times such as ‘holy days and holidays’ can become occasions when ‘grace’ is spoken through them by preaching.¹⁰² Another possibility, through emphasising liturgical assembly as the locus for preaching, is as with Coggan, *New Day for Preaching: The Sacrament of the Word*, to develop the sacramental nature of preaching itself.¹⁰³ In a different direction, the emphasis on liturgical assembly, allows for attention to be focussed on the congregation as the Body of Christ, among whom preaching is proclaimed and heard as the Word of

⁹⁸ Paul Scott Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, rev. edn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 2.

⁹⁹ Wright, ‘The problems’, 2.

¹⁰⁰ Clearly there are some exceptions to this dominant approach such as Jolyon P. Mitchell’s *Visually Speaking: Radio and the Renaissance of Preaching* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999), which considers what preachers can learn from religious radio broadcasters.

¹⁰¹ For a variety of approaches to this, *Preaching in the Context of Worship*, ed. by David M. Greenhaw and Ronald J. Allen (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2000).

¹⁰² *Preaching Through Holy Days and Holidays: Sermons that Work XI*, ed. by Roger Alling and David J. Schlafer (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2003).

¹⁰³ Donald Coggan, *New Day for Preaching: The Sacrament of the Word* (London: SPCK, 1996).

God. Among the writers who have developed their thinking along these lines are Fred Craddock and Leonora Tubbs Tisdale.¹⁰⁴ Accordingly, knowing the congregation can be considered critical for rhetorical communicative effectiveness.¹⁰⁵ From a different perspective, to give prominence to the participation of the congregation in the determining of meaning, can accord with more post-modern approaches to preaching such as in the work of John S. McClure, *The Roundtable Pulpit: Where Leadership and Preaching Meet*.¹⁰⁶ Or from a yet again different theological position, a communal liturgical emphasis can resonate with the preaching concerns of those who perceive churches as cultural-linguistic communities.¹⁰⁷ Locating preaching within the context of liturgical assembly, therefore, not only describes the common experience of preaching but provides a variety of opportunities for developing preaching practice, theory, and theology.

A survey of contemporary academic homiletical literature, therefore, demonstrates that preaching is largely understood as an activity that occurs within the context of a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly. Seldom stated and in keeping with regular practice, this is accompanied by the assumption that this will take place in a building designated for this purpose, with appropriate resources and furniture, if not architecture. The literature also demonstrates that this context allows for the theory and theology of preaching to be developed in a number of directions, variously considered relevant by the writers, to the contemporary socio-religious context.

¹⁰⁴ Fred Craddock, *Preaching* (Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1985); Leonora Tubbs Tisdale, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press 1997).

¹⁰⁵ McClure, *Four Codes*, 5-6.

¹⁰⁶ John. S. McClure, *The Roundtable Pulpit: Where Leadership and Preaching Meet* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995) also *Other-Wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics* (Missouri: Chalice Press, 2001). For another post-modern approach to preaching, Doug Pagitt, *Preaching Re-Imagined: The Role of the Sermon in Communities of Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005).

¹⁰⁷ Richard Lischer, *The End of Words: The Language of Reconciliation in a Culture of Violence* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005); Charles L. Campbell, *Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei's Postliberal Theology* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997).

1.3.3. The Dangers of Neglecting Open-Air Preaching

With an emphasis on the regular experience of preaching in the context of a congregation gathered in worship, it should not be surprising that the writers of contemporary homiletical literature say little about open-air preaching.

Paradoxically, this may be welcomed. It preserves the particularity of open-air preaching as a practice which historically has had an ambiguous relationship with dominant church authorities, practices, and worship. It is this distinctiveness which has allowed it to function prophetically in renewal and reform. This notwithstanding, the neglect can be problematic for the theory and practice of open-air preaching. It can indicate without any demonstrated academic reflection its wholesale rejection as irrelevant in the present socio-religious context. That such is presently the case, is suggested by the lack of contemporary homiletical literature that discusses open-air preaching. Following on from this, an un-reflexive acceptance that preaching by definition, theoretically and theologically, occurs within the context of a congregation gathered in worship, can result in open-air preaching, despite its long history, no longer being regarded as ‘authentic’ preaching. Consider again, by way of example the work of Quicke. In advancing his ‘More Adequate’ Trinitarian model of preaching, he states that the listeners who are required to make this preaching ‘authentic’ are:

a congregation drawn together by God to participate in worship. They are a community of the baptized, “a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 2:5)...Everything in 360-degree preaching concerns the people of God. The grace of our Triune God holds together preacher and hearers so that God’s Word does not return empty.¹⁰⁸

The implication of this statement is that where such listeners are not present, then that which occurs is not authentic preaching. This may appear to overstate the case but Paul Scott Wilson clearly unaware of his own unquestioned assumptions responds to the open-air preaching advocated by Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell by suggesting that something was ‘lost’ in the preaching which they were advocating as a result of it:

¹⁰⁸ Quicke, *360-Degree*, 61.

being not just outside and separated from the supporting structures of regular worship, but perhaps also being perceived as outside of a church of an accountable community, or outside where the world may be willing to hear.¹⁰⁹

This statement by Wilson appears to be founded on the assumption that somehow by definition if preaching does not take place in the context of a congregation gathered in worship, then it is to be considered theologically and theologically in deficit. It is an assumption stated rather than discussed. As such it functions to the detriment of open-air preaching and other forms of preaching which may take place outside of the normal context of worship. The neglect of open-air preaching, therefore, in contemporary homiletical literature, rather than being something neutral, or even positive, can be harmful towards the genre and any potential for future development.

The neglect of open-air preaching in much contemporary homiletical literature can also be detrimental to the practice of in-church preaching. Here the danger is that writers create theories and theologies with reliance upon unquestioned in-church assumptions and the limitations of them. Wilson's book, *The Practice of Preaching*, is a practical, helpful, and theologically informed text book on in-church preaching.¹¹⁰ On the first page he refers to the painting on the cover of the book by Jean-Paul Lemieux, a Quebec artist, painted in 1941 with the title 'Lazare or Lazarus'.¹¹¹ Although the painting contains a variety of scenes of death and destruction, it is dominated by a cut-away church showing a worshipping congregation listening to a preacher. All the lines of this church, Wilson says, point away from themselves to the top right hand of the canvas where Christ is portrayed beneath a tree raising Lazarus from the dead. Interpreting this picture Wilson states:

The painting as a whole says that in the midst of war and death, something else goes on connected with it, the church gathers for worship, the gospel is preached, and faith continues to bear fruit. However strong the axis of death may be, the axis of life is stronger. The two axes form the cross. Everything in the picture points to Jesus - even the preacher points to Jesus - and if you look closely Jesus points straight up to God.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Wilson, *Preaching*, 124. I have already referred to the work by Saunders and Campbell and will discuss it more fully in the section 'The Literature of Advocacy' which follows.

¹¹⁰ Paul Scott Wilson, *The Practice of Preaching*, rev. edn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007).

¹¹¹ Wilson, *Practice*, 1.

¹¹² Wilson, *Practice*, 2.

Wilson continues, ‘Lemieux makes a powerful statement about the effectiveness of preaching’.¹¹³ Wilson, however, makes no reference to the fact that all the scenes of death and destruction, as well as the event of hope and resurrection, are not taking place in the church with the congregation but outside where the Christ is to be found. To make this observation is to suggest that with attention to physical location, alternative readings are possible. It is to invite clarification and explanation of the direct relationship of in-church preaching to the lived reality of the world outside the church. The argument here is simply that by neglecting the challenge of the changed context and location faced by open-air preaching, the writers of contemporary homiletical literature run the danger of failing to see and satisfactorily address the limitations of their own assumptions, conventions, and practices. Helpfully, while Stevenson and Wright decide to concentrate on preaching in the context of worship, they indicate self-critical awareness that there could be limitations in this approach.¹¹⁴

Despite its long history and diverse nature, open-air preaching is a practice largely neglected in much contemporary, academic, homiletical literature. This is understandable as the writers concentrate on the dominant expression of Christian preaching, which is that which occurs among a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly. The danger of this neglect, however, is that it completely minimises the significance of open-air preaching, either as a practice in its own right, or in terms of the contribution that it can make to an understanding of the practice, theory, and theology of preaching as a whole.

1.4. Literature of Advocacy

In this study of open-air preaching as radical street performance, open-air preaching is the core practice. It is largely neglected in much contemporary, academic, homiletical literature. My research, however, has also identified a body of literature,

¹¹³ Wilson, *Practice*, 2.

¹¹⁴ Wright, ‘The problems’, 2.

particularly from the time of Wesley and Whitefield, which seeks to promote open-air preaching. For this reason I have designated this literature, a 'literature of advocacy'. Some of this literature relates to the specific case studies and will be referred to later. In general, however, the literature of advocacy is often older and less academic, although not exclusively so.¹¹⁵ It has often been produced by practitioners and organisations that are seeking to promote the activity against what they regard as its neglect.¹¹⁶ Consequently, such literature often has a practical 'how to' concern. Authors associated with the Open-Air Mission are particularly prominent in mid nineteenth to early twentieth century publications.¹¹⁷ This mission was founded in 1853 by Scotsman, John MacGregor with the purpose:

To encourage, regulate, and improve open-air preaching, to create a bond of brotherhood between open-air preachers, to select those who should engage in the work, to assist them in their studies by lectures, conferences, meetings and the circulation of suitable books, and to issue tracts and other publications relating to the Mission.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁵ G.C. Smith, *The Open Air Preaching Hymn Book and the Canopy of Heaven* (London: British Open Air Preaching Society, 1830); *Services at the Centenary Celebration of Whitefield's Apostolic Labours, held in The Tabernacle, Moorfields, May 21st, 1839. With Introductory Observations on Open-air Preaching*, ed. by John Campbell (London: John Snow, 1839); John Knox, *The Masses Without* (London: Judd and Glass, 1857).

¹¹⁶ In addition to the other examples that I give there are a number of American organisations that promote open-air preaching. These organisations tend to be evangelical, some fundamentalist and often strongly right-wing in terms of the ethical issues that they address. For example, *Life and Liberty Ministries*, <http://www.lifeandlibertyministries.com/archives/000091.php>, accessed, 20/5/07, *The Street Preachers Home Page*, <http://www.biblebelievers.com/StreetPreaching1.html>, 20/5/07; *Publick Ministry*, <http://www.streetpreaching.com/>, 20/5/07. Ray Comfort is an open-air preacher whose work is promoted in various ways including by books and video courses and through his *Living Waters* organisation, <http://www.livingwaters.com/openair.shtml>, accessed, 20/5/07. Such organisations frequently reinforce stereotypical understanding of the nature of the practice.

¹¹⁷ John Macgregor, *Go Out Quickly* (London: Blackburn and Burt, 1855); Godfrey Holden Pike, *Beneath the Blue Sky: Preaching in the Open-Air* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888); Gawin Kirkham, *The Open-Air Preacher's Handbook*, 2nd edn (London: Morgan and Scott, 1890); John Galt, *Open-Air Preaching: What to Avoid and What to Do* (London: Partridge, 1903); Frank Cockrem, *The Open-Air Preacher's Counsellor: A Handbook to Highway Witnessing*, 4th edn (London: Morgan and Scott, 1912).

¹¹⁸ Alan J. Greenbank, *The Lord's Doing: The Open-Air Mission, 1853-2003* (London: Open-Air Mission, 2003), 7. One interesting point of specific connection between the Open-Air Mission and my case studies is that one of the leading figures in the formation of the organisation was Alexander Haldane, son of James Haldane and author of his biography, Donald M. Lewis, *Lighten Their Darkness: The Evangelical Mission to Working-Class London, 1828-1860* (London: Greenwood Press, 1986), 225, although Lewis notes the connection to his uncle Robert rather than his father James, 16.

More modern literature is limited and largely popular in nature.¹¹⁹ The literature produced by advocates of open-air preaching has a number of recurring themes. These are: the biblical example and mandate for open-air preaching, the historical longevity and perceived success of the practice, its missional necessity relating to socio-religious culture, and its particular nature as a genre of preaching. Three specific examples of the literature of advocacy, however, are worth particular discussion. These are two lectures by Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-1892), a lecture by Donald Soper, and more recent, academic writing, on open-air preaching.

1.4.1. Spurgeon's Advocacy

Charles Haddon Spurgeon has been described as a preaching 'genius'.¹²⁰ While preaching in the open air was not his dominant activity, it was a practice in which he participated.¹²¹ He also advocated it to others in two lectures on open-air preaching, 'Open Air Preaching – A Sketch of its History' and 'Open Air Preaching – Remarks Thereon'. These were published as part of his influential *Lectures to My Students*.¹²² These lectures are significant for a number of reasons. As a historical document they provide a primary source demonstrating the historical nature of the practice. They are authored by a notable in-church preacher who was also an open-air practitioner. The historical sketch, although often limited in detail, lacking analytical differentiation, and not referencing sources, is yet one of the most comprehensive sketches available. It includes mention of open-air preachers from England, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Continental Europe and America. These lectures are also illustrative of the recurring themes found in the literature of advocacy relating to such matters as biblical mandate, historical validity, missional necessity, and practical requirements. In terms of the long history of the practice, in relation to biblical example, he locates open-air

¹¹⁹ Mike Sprenger, *Presenting Jesus in the Open Air* (Milton Keynes: Word, 1988); Ken Gaskell, *Open-Air Evangelism Today* (Cambridge: Grove, 1997).

¹²⁰ Edwards, *History*, 455.

¹²¹ Edwards, *History*, 461.

¹²² Charles H. Spurgeon, *Second Series of Lectures to My Students: Being Addresses Delivered to the Students of The Pastors College, Metropolitan Tabernacle* (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1881), 54-75 and 76-95 respectively.

preaching as far back as the character of ‘Enoch, the seventh from Adam’.¹²³ Another factor that makes these lectures significant is that they are often cited by later advocates of the practice.¹²⁴ In addition, Spurgeon says several things in these lectures, which without ignoring his specific historical context, are worth further comment in the light both of what has been discussed earlier and what will follow, in the rest of this thesis.

One significant comment made by Spurgeon in these lectures is that:

I fear that in some of our less enlightened country churches, there are conservative individuals who almost believe that to preach, anywhere except in the chapel would be a shocking innovation, a sure token of heretical tendencies, and a mark of zeal without knowledge.¹²⁵

This comment is important because it indicates that opposition to open-air preaching is not something new or simply a result of twenty-first century cultural sensibilities, with respect to mission. As to the cause of this opposition, interestingly, Spurgeon opines that it is a result of religious conservatism. This conservatism relates to the regular church location being considered the only proper location for preaching. To be sure, in terms of its biblical and historical validity, Spurgeon wishes to argue that open-air preaching is not a ‘shocking innovation’.¹²⁶ Indeed, in the mid-nineteenth century, open-air preachers were so common at least in the cities, that one contemporary critic compared them to caterpillars swarming over a leaf in all directions.¹²⁷ Be this as it may, Spurgeon also acknowledges that open-air preaching is an irregular practice. In discussing its relationship to times of renewal and revival he states that it has sounded the ‘wild note’ of preaching, less sweet perhaps but more natural than the bird song which occurs in ‘cages’.¹²⁸ In the writing of Spurgeon, therefore, there is a demonstrated tension between asserting the validity of

¹²³ Spurgeon, ‘Sketch’, 54.

¹²⁴ So for example, Gawin Kirkham in his book, *Open-Air Preaching*, includes a condensed form of these two lectures as part of his own advocacy, 110-116. In a later book associated with OAC GB to be discussed in chapter 6 and entitled, *Open Air Evangelism: A Practical Handbook*, ed. by Mark Howe (Hants: Christian Literature Crusade, 1991) reference is also made to these lectures, 25-26.

¹²⁵ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 76.

¹²⁶ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 77.

¹²⁷ ‘Open Air Preaching’, a handbill from the John Johnson Collection, Religion, Box 27, Bodleian Library Oxford, reproduced, Lewis, *Lighten*, 226

¹²⁸ Spurgeon, ‘Sketch’, p. 69.

open-air preaching as an expression of Christian preaching and the recognition of its unconventional nature. This being the case, the question is at least posed as to what extent contemporary opposition to open-air preaching is the result of religious conservatism towards an irregular and unconventional practice. There could be a paradox here. Today open-air preaching is usually associated with more conservative and fundamentalist evangelical groups. To oppose open-air preaching *per se*, however, may itself be a sign of conservative reaction against an activity whose irregular nature and ‘fanaticism’ disturbs conventional practice.¹²⁹

Another aspect of Spurgeon’s lectures worth commenting on is his reasons for advocating open-air preaching as a missional act. He writes, ‘*The great benefit of open-air preaching is that we get so many new comers to hear the gospel who otherwise would never hear it*’.¹³⁰ To go and preach where people are to be found, argues Spurgeon, has the potential of gaining the attention if not the allegiance of those ‘whose character and condition would quite preclude their having been found in a place of worship’.¹³¹ Among such people he includes ‘strangers and foreigners’ of non-Christian religions, non-evangelical Christians, those who hold to various ‘eccentric’ religious views and accordingly ‘hate the very sight’ of churches, those whose class and clothes would prevent them from attending and might find themselves unwelcome, and those who consider services ‘dull’ in contrast to other possible pastimes.¹³² As a consequence, to preach in the open air for Spurgeon, was to go to the ‘domains’ of those ‘whom we shall never reach unless we pursue them’, it was to ‘try and find new saints among the sinners who are perishing for lack of knowledge’.¹³³ To do this was to follow the instructions of Christ, ‘Go ye into the highways and hedges and compel them to come in’, a favourite injunction among advocates of open-air preaching.¹³⁴ In turn, for Spurgeon, the missional potential of

¹²⁹ Campbell says that in a liberal culture it is acceptable for people to be fanatical about many things except religion whereas the gospel calls for the fanatical response of one’s total life, Campbell, ‘Street’, 106.

¹³⁰ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 78, italics Spurgeon.

¹³¹ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 78.

¹³² Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 79-80.

¹³³ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 78.

¹³⁴ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 78.

open-air preaching was based ultimately upon his theological convictions with respect to the power of the Word of God preached.¹³⁵ He writes in the conclusion to a lecture:

Christ is to be preached whether men believe in him or no. Our own experience of His power to save will be our best reasoning, and earnestness our best rhetoric. The occasion will frequently suggest the fittest thing to say and we also fall back on his Holy Spirit who will teach us in the self same hour what we shall speak.¹³⁶

To advocate open-air preaching, therefore, involves not simply convictions about its necessity and practical efficacy but it also involves theological convictions with respect to the nature of the Word of God preached.

A further, and at this point final, comment on the content of Spurgeon's lectures is his demonstrated awareness with respect to the nature of the streets. He writes explicitly conscious that in the streets the relationship between preachers and listeners is different to that found in church. This is so much the case he claims:

The less you are like a parson the more likely you are to be heard; and if you are known to be a minister, the more you show yourself to be a man the better. 'What do you get for that, governor?' is sure to be asked, if you appear to be a cleric, and it will be well to tell them at once that this is extra, that you are doing overtime, and that there is to be no collection.¹³⁷

Spurgeon writes, therefore, aware that in the streets religious status does not on its own necessarily carry any weight and can be counterproductive. The preacher can assume no given respect. Through their performance they require to gather an audience and gain hearing. In this regard, with a large degree of wit, he satirizes the sight of a person in the open air preaching to their 'dog' or even to their 'hat'.¹³⁸ Spurgeon recognises, however, that open-air preachers not only need to gather an audience and gain a hearing but require to do this in a context where people are free to walk away, respond, object, interrupt, shout out.¹³⁹ Violence is possible.¹⁴⁰ In the open air preachers do not have the status, power, and control that they have in church

¹³⁵ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 95.

¹³⁶ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 95.

¹³⁷ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 91.

¹³⁸ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 88-89.

¹³⁹ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 89.

¹⁴⁰ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 87.

buildings and the support of authorities is not guaranteed.¹⁴¹ These observations by Spurgeon, about the nature of preaching in what can be called public space touch upon another possible paradox pertinent to the contemporary situation. Open-air preaching can be associated with an authoritarian style of ‘preaching at’ people. It can certainly take this form. Passers-by may resent preachers imposing their views upon them in the streets. In the open air, however, perhaps more than in any church building and or even special service, people have considerably more freedom to react and to respond and to engage with what they are hearing than they do seated in the buildings in the context of church worship services.

Spurgeon’s lectures assume a late nineteenth-century socio-religious context. This is not denied. As such they are an interesting primary source for the historic practice of open-air preaching. More than this, however, they are illustrative of common arguments used still by advocates of open-air preaching. In terms of this research, as discussed above, his lectures also raise pertinent issues with respect to the relationship between open-air preaching and in-church preaching, the significance of theology in determining activity, and the fact that preaching in the open air requires preachers to gather an audience and gain a hearing from those who may disagree with them. These themes will re-emerge as I explore the dynamics of open-air preaching as radical street performance.

1.4.2. Donald Soper’s Advocacy

One older book worth mentioning with respect to open-air preaching, not least in the light of the paucity of material available is Donald Soper’s, *The Advocacy of the Gospel*, which contains six lectures given at Yale Divinity School in 1960.¹⁴² One of these is on open-air preaching.¹⁴³ In this lecture he helpfully distinguishes between different forms of open-air preaching, describes techniques, and draws clear

¹⁴¹ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 88.

¹⁴² Donald Soper, *The Advocacy of the Gospel* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1961).

¹⁴³ Soper, *Advocacy*, 64-82.

distinctions between open-air preaching and in-church preaching. The contemporary application of what he says has limitations. He writes in relation to his own socio-religious context. He also preached most regularly in a particular type of open-air preaching location. Tower Hill and Speaker's Corner in London were places where discussion and debate were expected, if not looked for, by those who attended.¹⁴⁴ This is not always the sort of space in which open-air preaching takes place, although to be fair, this was something of which Soper was aware.¹⁴⁵

Limitations notwithstanding, Soper's lecture is significant and helpful for a number of reasons. It provides a primary twentieth century source, relating to the long, varied, and significant history of open-air preaching. It was written by a notable practitioner who was still preaching outdoors twenty days before his death in 1998.¹⁴⁶ It was written by someone who was a recognised communicator through a range of other mediums, including in-church preaching, radio, and television.¹⁴⁷ In describing what is and what is not appropriate in open-air preaching in contrast to in-church preaching, he draws analogies with what is and is not appropriate in television communication.¹⁴⁸ His lecture is also significant in that Soper's 'liberal' theology and the range of his socio-political interests in relation to the content of his open-air preaching, mean he does not fit within the regular stereotype.¹⁴⁹

Three particular aspects of his lecture are worth mentioning here. The first is that there is defensiveness in what he writes with a felt need to 'justify' the inclusion of open-air preaching in his lectures.¹⁵⁰ This is again indicative that opposition to open-air preaching is not simply a present day phenomenon. Second, he indicates that in advocating Christ to people outwith the church the open-air preachers will find themselves as representatives of the church, both for and against the institution. They

¹⁴⁴ Soper, *Advocacy*, 67.

¹⁴⁵ Soper, *Advocacy*, 65-69

¹⁴⁶ Mark Peel, *The Last Wesleyan* (Lancaster: Scotforth Books, 2008), 279.

¹⁴⁷ Frost, *Goodwill*, 5.

¹⁴⁸ Soper, *Advocacy*, 77-78.

¹⁴⁹ Frost, *Goodwill*, 28.

¹⁵⁰ Soper, *Advocacy*, 64.

will require to acknowledge its faults but to promote its spirit.¹⁵¹ To navigate such he writes ‘is part of the travail of the preacher’.¹⁵² Third, he is aware of the limitations of open-air preaching. Soper does not deny the power of the gospel preached to change lives and bears witness to that in his lecture.¹⁵³ Be this as it may, he recognises that the communicative context is such that it can be very difficult to reach the point where a preacher will have the opportunity to declare their faith, commend their Lord, and say something about the cross of Christ, to an attentive audience.¹⁵⁴ He writes:

Many a time it has been my lot to spend an hour and a quarter fiddling about with this and that - getting into wrangles and out of them - debating the inequalities of politicians and suffering the attacks upon the Church, for the sake, in the last two or three minutes, of advocating Christ.¹⁵⁵

Consequently, Soper sees the greatest value in the practice as giving an opportunity to ‘shop window’ the case for Christianity, breaking down barriers, and ‘if you are convincing’ creating steps forward for people in their relation to Christianity.¹⁵⁶ In his lecture, therefore, he demonstrates that it is possible to advocate open-air preaching and have confidence in the power of the gospel, without making greater necessary claims for the regular efficacy of open-air preaching other than that which it is realistically likely to achieve in its particular communicative context. Subsequently, when it achieves more than this, it is a source of joy in the grace of God.¹⁵⁷

1.4.3. Contemporary Advocacy

The primary contemporary advocacy for open-air preaching is found in the work of Charles L. Campbell. This is found principally in his collaborative writing with New

¹⁵¹ Soper, *Advocacy*, 73-74.

¹⁵² Soper, *Advocacy*, 73.

¹⁵³ Soper, *Advocacy*, 82.

¹⁵⁴ Soper, *Advocacy*, 82.

¹⁵⁵ Soper, *Advocacy*, 81.

¹⁵⁶ Soper, *Advocacy*, 80-81.

¹⁵⁷ Soper, *Advocacy*, 82.

Testament scholar Stanley P. Saunders and entitled, *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context*.¹⁵⁸ The ‘performing’ in the title is related to the work of Nicholas Lash.¹⁵⁹ It refers to the interpretation of Scripture by a Christian community as it embodies in its own life and actions that which it reads in the Scriptures.¹⁶⁰ The particular Christian Community which Saunders and Campbell have in mind is the Open Door Community which works among and advocates on behalf of the poor in Atlanta. Both authors have worked with the community as volunteers. This has included them and their students engaging in a variety of ‘street preaching’ activities. Consequently, much of the book, which is a compilation of various essays by the authors, is concerned with interpreting and embodying the Scriptures in the location of the streets among the poor and homeless. An important outcome of this is to emphasise the significance of ‘physical location’ in addition to ‘social location’ as a factor influencing Scriptural interpretation.¹⁶¹

The specific discussion in the book on open-air preaching comes in the chapter ‘Street Preaching’ written by Campbell.¹⁶² Campbell covers the familiar themes found in the literature of advocacy, of the biblical background, historical nature, missional intent, and the particularity, of open-air preaching. With respect to the latter and in contrast to in-church preaching he writes:

On the streets...all of the institutional trappings of preaching are stripped away. No pulpit offers security; no sanctuary provides a “safe place”; no ordination grants the preacher status and authority. Rather, preachers must rely on God’s Word and the human voice alone.¹⁶³

¹⁵⁸ Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell, *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000).

¹⁵⁹ Nicholas Lash, ‘Performing the Scriptures’, *Theology on the Way to Emmaus* (London: SCM Press, 1986), 37-46.

¹⁶⁰ Stanley P. Saunders and Charles L. Campbell, ‘Conversions in Context: A Road Map’, in Saunders and Campbell, *The Word*, 5-26, 7. For an application of the necessary relationship between the life lived and the preacher as performer, Charles L. Campbell and Clayton H. Hulet, ‘Moments of Inspiration: Preaching Jazz, Improvisation, and the Work of the Spirit’, *Journal for Preachers*, 21:4 (1998), 30-35.

¹⁶¹ Stanley P. Saunders, ‘Street Readings/Reading the Streets: Reading the Bible Through the Lens of the Streets, Reading the Streets Through the Lens of the Bible’, in Saunders and Campbell, *The Word*, 86-94, 87 and 89 respectively.

¹⁶² Campbell, ‘Street’, 95-107.

¹⁶³ Campbell, ‘Street’, 104.

In his discussion, Campbell is aware of the activity and perception of stereotypical street preachers. In response, he offers alternative examples and understandings to challenge the stereotypes. He faces, however, the same tension as other advocates. This is the desire to argue for the validity of the practice while maintaining its disruptive irregularity. In terms of the irregularity of open-air preaching he produced a later paper entitled, 'The Preacher as Ridiculous Person: Naked Street Preaching and Homiletical Foolishness'.¹⁶⁴ In this paper he identified a number of biblical and historical examples of naked street preachers including he suggests, Isaiah, Jesus on the Cross, St. Francis of Assisi and St. Basil of Moscow (c.1468-1552). In his discussion of these characters, as illustrative of the foolishness of preaching, he suggests that it was in the very madness and unacceptability of the acts that their prophetic and disruptive significance is to be found.

Through his essay on 'Street Preaching' and other essays, Campbell raises a number of important issues for this thesis and my exploration of open-air preaching as radical street performance. He suggests that as an 'extreme homiletic' the practice is personally liberating for preachers.¹⁶⁵ He makes connections between street preaching and acts of protest and resistance. He suggests that street preaching is a socio-political act.¹⁶⁶ He identifies the streets not only as 'public space' but as 'contested space'.¹⁶⁷ He posits such preaching from his post-liberal theological perspective, as a Word preached against the principalities and powers manifest as ideologies, structures, institutions, and practices, that bring death rather than promote life.¹⁶⁸ These issues raised by Campbell are themes which I will return to, discuss,

¹⁶⁴ Charles L. Campbell, 'The Preacher as Ridiculous Person: Naked Street Preaching and Homiletical Foolishness', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2007), 149-158. All of the *Academy of Homiletics* papers used in this research were downloaded from the members section of the Academy of Homiletics Website, www.homiletics.org, and accessed 25/10/07.

¹⁶⁵ Campbell, 'Street', 95-96, 104-107.

¹⁶⁶ Campbell, 'Street' 102-103.

¹⁶⁷ Saunders and Campbell, 'Conversions', 17-25.

¹⁶⁸ Charles L. Campbell, 'The Streets, the Powers, and the Word: Learning from William Stringfellow', in Saunders and Campbell, *The Word*, 63-82. For Campbell on this idea applied primarily to in-church preaching, 'Performing the Scriptures: Preaching and Jesus' "Third Way", *Journal for Preachers*, 17:2 (1994), 18-24; *The Word Before the Powers: An Ethic of Preaching* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 'Principalities, Powers, and Fools: Does Preaching Make an Ethical Difference', *Homiletic*, 33:2 (2008), 1-10.

develop, and in some respects test in my analysis of open-air preaching as radical street performance.

Despite the connections, however, there are several significant differences between my work and that of Campbell. My work is considerably longer, more detailed, and concerned with specific examples of open-air preaching that Campbell does not discuss. More significantly, however, there is a methodological difference. While Campbell draws his understanding of performance from Lash, I draw my methodological understanding from that of radical street performance. This means that my analysis of open-air preaching in performance terms is broader in a number of ways than Campbell's, while including some of his emphases. One important area where the difference becomes apparent is that from the perspective of radical street performance, I am interested in the way that the deliberate use of skills, dramatic features, and theatrics in presentation and delivery, are intentionally used by open-air preachers as a way of gathering an audience and gaining a hearing from people in the streets. With his post-liberal emphasis on open-air preaching as a Word against the powers, this is something to which he gives little attention.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, in his paper on 'Naked Street Preachers' he ultimately uses the practice of open-air preaching to deconstruct the value of homiletics in order to highlight the ultimate power of the foolishness of the Word preached.¹⁷⁰ My analytical approach, therefore, and interest in the application of performance skills to the ways in which open-air preachers gather an audience and gain a hearing, goes beyond the work of Campbell.¹⁷¹ Be this as it may, Campbell does acknowledge that biblical and historical events including open-air preaching may have been deliberately planned and executed as political street theatre as part of their communicative impact.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁹ An insight into Campbell's post-liberal homiletic can be gained from Charles L. Campbell, *Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei's Postliberal Theology* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997).

¹⁷⁰ Campbell, 'Naked Street Preachers', 156-158.

¹⁷¹ This difference in emphasis between my approach and that expressed by Campbell in *The Word on the Street* was confirmed in e-mail correspondence from Campbell with author, 31/1/08.

¹⁷² Charles L. Campbell, 'Street Theater', in Saunders and Campbell, *The Word*, 108-113, 'Naked Street Preachers', 153.

One other contemporary example of the literature of advocacy is found in two chapters in Chris Erdman's book, *Countdown to Sunday: A Daily Guide for Those Who Dare to Preach*.¹⁷³ The discussion is brief consisting of no more than eight pages. Yet, in these pages, with reference to Scripture, he argues that the Word belongs in 'bodily witness out in the world'.¹⁷⁴ Consequently, just as stereotypical street preaching can 'humiliate' the Word so can 'the fact that so much preaching and Bible study are done inside the safe confines of church buildings'.¹⁷⁵ He advocates, therefore, street preaching that is done as part of the communal activity and embodied witness of a church community present in the world.¹⁷⁶ As explicated, such open-air preaching is the preaching that finds a space in the socio-political involvement of a church on behalf of the poor and against the powers. Thus he describes a sermon delivered before council officials as part of church protest about poor housing conditions.¹⁷⁷ In such an understanding there are many echoes of ideas found in Campbell.

Erdman's particular contribution to the understanding of open-air preaching, as referred to above, is his strong emphasis on the communal nature of the practice. He recognises that at times there may be the requirement for daring individual preachers to 'put their bodies into the street and on the line for the Word of God'.¹⁷⁸ He suggests, however, that the goal of individual street preaching should be to create 'street preaching congregations'.¹⁷⁹ By this he means church communities who go and get involved together in situations such as the cause of the poor and homeless and begin to advocate on their behalf.¹⁸⁰ Erdman also makes the interesting suggestion that open-air preaching may have the function of helping to form church

¹⁷³ Chris Erdman, *Countdown to Sunday: A Daily Guide for those Who Dare to Preach* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, Press, 2007), 117-124.

¹⁷⁴ Erdman, *Countdown*, 117.

¹⁷⁵ Erdman, *Countdown*, 118.

¹⁷⁶ Erdman, *Countdown*, 119-120.

¹⁷⁷ Erdman, *Countdown*, 122-124.

¹⁷⁸ Erdman, *Countdown*, 118.

¹⁷⁹ Erdman, *Countdown*, 119.

¹⁸⁰ Erdman, *Countdown*, 119.

communities to be such people.¹⁸¹ The idea does not appear to be that the preacher preaches to congregations in order to encourage them to participate in relevant activities but rather that the event of open-air preaching is an inspirational example for them. In this way Erdman resists two extremes. The first is the idea of the stereotypical 'lone ranger' open-air preacher.¹⁸² The second is that the only missional role for preaching is in-church preparing the people to go out and serve. The brevity of his work, however, is frustrating. It is not always clear exactly what he means even as he raises a number of interesting ideas. Be this as it may, he is one of few contemporary homiletical writers who seriously consider the value of open-air preaching.

1.5. Conclusions

Open-air preaching is widely associated with negative stereotypes. The stereotypes exist in both practice and perception. Insofar, however, as stereotypes are oversimplifications these can be challenged by the long history and diverse nature of open-air preaching. This diversity has been created by each open-air preaching event being the result of a particular combination of factors in relation to their particular socio-religious context. This notwithstanding, one factor which throughout history has resulted in people going to the open air, albeit with a range of contents and purposes, has been a missional concern to engage with people who would not normally be present in church services. This is the particular type of open-air preaching that I am analysing in this thesis as radical street performance.

Open-air preaching has not been the dominant expression of preaching in the history of the Christian Church. Consequently, in the contemporary situation it is largely neglected in much academic homiletical literature. This does not mean, however, that it is not a significant expression of Christian preaching. Its significance can lie precisely in its irregular nature or discordant note. It can be this feature of its

¹⁸¹ Erdman, *Countdown*, 117-118.

¹⁸² Erdman, *Countdown*, 119.

character that allows it to participate in the reform and renewal of the church. This said it has at times been appropriated by dominant church authorities in order to propagate their own purposes. Open-air preaching, therefore, has had an ambiguous relationship with dominant church authorities, worship services, and preaching practices. The danger of its neglect by the writers of contemporary homiletical literature, however, is at least two fold. On the one hand, it denies the significance of an historic and diverse expression of Christian preaching without any demonstrated academic discussion. On the other hand, it leaves assumptions, theories, and theologies of in-church preaching unchallenged at the fundamental level of locational context.

The necessity to take recourse to older literature, such as that by Spurgeon and Soper in considering open-air preaching, demonstrates the paucity of the research. Be this as it may, some of this literature is of consequence not simply as primary historical source material. Differences in socio-religious historical contexts notwithstanding, these writers also raise important issues and ideas that invite corresponding discussions in the present with regard to the theology and practice of preaching in the open air. The more contemporary literature of advocacy though limited is significant. The authors of these works seek to address the stereotypes of open-air preaching not simply by challenging perceptions but by advocating alternative forms of the activity. That is, these authors suggest a future for the practice. In so doing, they draw upon contemporary theological emphases in preaching such as post-liberal theology and a concern for the communal nature of preaching. In this way these writers, while aligning themselves with an ancient tradition bring fresh and current homiletical theology and theory to the practice.

In the light of the above, my research into open-air preaching as radical street performance is much closer to the literature of advocacy than the literature of neglect. In this chapter, I have argued for the long, varied, and complex nature of the practice, contrary to easy and negative stereotypes. In later chapters, I carefully consider historic and contemporary manifestations of open-air preaching, as valid expressions of Christian preaching, from the perspective of radical street performance. Implicit within this analysis are implications for the future practice of open-air preaching as performance. Be this as it may, the primary argument of the

thesis, is not so much advocacy for the practice of open-air preaching but is with respect to the value of the concept of radical street performance, as a constructive and illuminating way of understanding and analysing this expression of Christian preaching. In relation to the other homiletical literature discussed, therefore, this study is 'implicit advocacy', where the practice, past and present, is considered seriously as a valid expression of Christian preaching.

Chapter 2: Preaching as Performance

2.1. Introduction

In this thesis, I am examining open-air preaching as radical street performance. In chapter 1, I discuss the difficulty of such research in relation to its core practice, open-air preaching. Through the discussion, I challenge the commonly held stereotypes about open-air preaching in relation to the long and varied history of the practice. In addition, moving beyond the neglect of open-air preaching which is apparent in much contemporary homiletical literature, I position my own research as an example of ‘implicit advocacy’ in that I carefully consider historic and contemporary examples of open-air preaching as valid expressions of Christian preaching.

The research, however, into open-air preaching as radical street performance, reveals an immediate second difficulty. This pertains to the concept of performance. Performance is a concept widely appropriated and applied in a range of academic disciplines. When applied to preaching, however, it can have negative connotations. It can be associated with unhelpful and unattractive dimensions of preaching, ‘such as focussing mainly on the preacher, or on theatricality, or on entertainment, on things that distract from the Word’.¹ One theorist H. Herbert Sennett expressed the difficulty as follows:

The paradox between preaching (a serious issue for Christians) and performance (an assumed way of acting for the pleasure of others) is most intriguing. Can someone be serious about the message and present themselves as a ‘performer’ at the same time?²

The difficulty and paradox acknowledged there is a body of contemporary homiletical literature, whose writers positively understand preaching in performance terms. I designate this the ‘preaching as performance’ literature and the authors the

¹ Paul Scott Wilson, ‘Preaching, Performance and the Life and Death of “Now”’, in *Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life*, ed. by Jana Childers and Clayton J. Schmit (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 37-38.

² H. Herbert Sennett, Ph.D, e-mail correspondence with author, 12/11/07.

‘preaching as performance’ writers. In this chapter, therefore, following preliminary discussion of the definition and wider use of performance in academic study, I will offer a critical review of this preaching as performance literature. Through this review, I demonstrate the ways in which these writers show the suitability and potential of understanding preaching in performance terms. This identifies the immediate theoretical, conceptual context, within the field of homiletics, for my own research into open-air preaching as performance. I also demonstrate, however, the limitations of the concept of preaching as performance, as advanced by these writers, for understanding open-air preaching in performance terms. Consequently, in the light of these limitations, in chapter 3, I propose that the concept of radical street performance provides a more adequate and valuable way for understanding and analysing open-air preaching in performance terms.

2.2. Performance and Performance Studies

Performance is a concept whose definition has been affected by its appropriation and application in a range of academic disciplines. Performance theorist Marvin Carlson, in his helpful critical introduction to *Performance*, speaks of the recent and growing academic interest in the term performance, ‘in the arts, in literature, and in the social sciences.’³ He describes and discusses the application and use of performance, with respect to anthropology, ethnography, sociology, psychology, and linguistics.⁴ This wide appropriation of the concept has a number of consequences. It allows the whole of human life to be explored in terms of its theatrical, dramatic, and artistic qualities. Concurrently, it broadens the meaning of what can be described as theatrical, dramatic, and artistic performances. Consequently, it breaks down the barriers between everyday life as performance and artistic performance. The cumulative outcome of these developments is that a large number of activities can now be recognised and analysed as performance. The specific discipline which emerged to explore a wide range of human activities as performance is ‘performance studies’. Leading theorist, Richard Schechner, gives a comprehensive introduction to this

³ Marvin Carlson, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2004), 1.

⁴ Carlson, *Performance*, 12-80.

discipline in, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*.⁵ He also provides a helpful definition of performance as ‘showing doing’.⁶ This particular understanding undergirds this thesis. While the definition may appear to concentrate only on the visual, it is comprehensive enough to incorporate preaching as an act of showing doing. It is, however, a definition that gains particularity according to context. This will be demonstrated in the next chapter, when I qualify the basic conception of showing doing, with reference to the ‘radical’ and ‘street’ in radical street ‘performance’.

2.3. Theology and Performance

In addition to the use of the category of performance in other disciplines, it has also been appropriated, in the last twenty years or so, as an ‘analytic tool’, in a range of theological subject fields.⁷ This is apparent in systematic theology. On the one hand, there is the *Theological Dramatic Theory*, of Roman Catholic scholar, Hans Urs Von Balthasar, which uses various categories of drama in order to explore theological truths in relation to the action of God.⁸ On the other hand, there is the work of evangelical scholar Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical – linguistic Approach to Christian Theology*, where he seeks to bring together the importance of doctrine and practice in lived performance.⁹ Following on from this, performance has also been applied in various ways specifically to Christian ethics by writers such as Stanley Hauerwas, *Performing the Faith: Bonhoeffer and the Practice of Nonviolence* and Samuel Wells, *Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics*.¹⁰ It is a concept that has also been used with reference to biblical

⁵ Richard Schechner, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2006).

⁶ Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 28.

⁷ Carlson uses this phrase ‘analytic tool’, although not in reference to theology, *Performance*, 212.

⁸ Hans Urs Von Balthasar, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*, vol. 1, ‘Prologomena’, trans. by Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988=1983). In this volume he introduces and discusses the dramatic categories which undergird the following four volumes of his *Theo-Drama*.

⁹ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical – linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004).

¹⁰ Stanley Hauerwas, *Performing the Faith: Bonhoeffer and the Practice of Nonviolence* (London: SPCK, 2004); Samuel Wells, *Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics* (London: SPCK, 2004).

interpretation. Some writers have analysed parts of both the Old and New Testaments as performance texts. One example of this is William Doan and Terry Giles, *Prophets, Performance and Power*.¹¹ Other writers have concentrated on interpreting the drama of narratives within texts as ‘Prophetic Performance Art’.¹² Yet others still, have explored the intersection between such interpretations and ethical living.¹³ Stephen Barton writes, ‘the Church *is* a social ethic, constituted as such through its ongoing performance of, its creative fidelity to, the scriptural story of God in Christ’.¹⁴ In terms of these wider theological applications of performance, a useful book offering description, discussion, critique, and its own creative approaches, is *Faithful Performances: Enacting Christian Tradition*, edited by Trevor A. Hart and Steven R. Guthrie.¹⁵

The appropriation and application of performance to systematic theology, ethics, and biblical hermeneutics, has direct and indirect consequences and possibilities for preaching. Some of the authors of this wider theological literature make explicit reference to preaching. Frances Young is one such writer. She uses the image of an orchestra playing a music score, to describe the congregational interpretation of Scripture. Within this image, preaching is posited in terms of a soloist improvising in a cadenza and bringing new contextual developments to traditional themes.¹⁶ Some of the preaching as performance writers also draw upon and refer to these wider

¹¹ William Doan and Terry Giles, *Prophets, Performance and Power: Performance Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (London: T&T Clark, 2005). See also, Whitney Shiner, *Proclaiming the Gospel: First-Century Performance of Mark* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003).

¹² The journal, *The Bible and Critical Theory*, 2:1 (2006) gives a range of interpretations of biblical texts as radical street theatre. The comments by guest editor Yvonne Sherwood, ‘Prophetic Performance Art’, are helpful and instructive, 1-4.

¹³ Nicholas Lash, ‘Performing the Scriptures’, *Theology on the Way to Emmaus* (London: SCM Press, 1986), 37-46; Frances Young, *The Art of Performance: Towards a Theology of Holy Scripture* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990); Stephen C. Barton, ‘New Testament Interpretation As Performance’, in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 52:2 (1999), 179-208; Shannon Craigo-Snell, ‘Command Performance: Rethinking Performance Interpretation in the Context of *Divine Discourse*’, *Modern Theology* 16:4 (2000), 475-494; Kevin J. Vanhoozer, ‘The Voice and the Actor: A Dramatic Proposal about the Ministry and Minstrelsy of Theology’, *Evangelical Futures: A Conversation on Theological Method*, ed. by John G. Stackhouse, Jr., (Leicester: IVP, 2000), 61-106.

¹⁴ Barton, ‘New Testament’, 205, italics Barton.

¹⁵ *Faithful Performances: Enacting Christian Tradition*, ed. by Trevor A. Hart and Steven R. Guthrie (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

¹⁶ Young, *The Art*, 160-162.

theological disciplines, particularly in the area of biblical studies.¹⁷ I recognise these inter-connections throughout. My specific interest, however, is the way in which writers in homiletics approach and apply the concept of performance to preaching.

2.4. The Preaching as Performance Literature

With respect to preaching and performance, there is a body of homiletical literature that positively appropriates and applies the concept to preaching. The work of these authors provides the immediate theoretical context for understanding open-air preaching in performance terms.

The largest body of preaching as performance literature is generated by writers associated with the North American 'Academy of Homiletics'.¹⁸ Their most recent and mature work is a collection of essays, *Performance in Preaching*, edited by Jana Childers and Clayton J. Schmit.¹⁹ This writing builds on and develops themes previously raised by a variety of writers. Both Childers and Schmit, who have emerged as leading figures, have previously written on this subject. Childers has helpfully written on *Preaching as Theatre*, giving attention to the total embodied event of preaching from preparation to delivery.²⁰ Schmit has emphasised the power and place of preaching as 'Liturgical Speech'.²¹ The particular approaches of these

¹⁷ See bibliography section entitled 'Performance and Biblical Studies' in *Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life*, ed. by Jana Childers and J. Schmit (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 228-235.

¹⁸ For a useful summary of the North American developments and the formation of the Academy, Don M. Wardlaw, 'Homiletics and Preaching in North America', *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching* ed. by William H. Willimon and Richard Lischer (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995), 242-252.

¹⁹ *Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life*, ed. by Jana Childers and Clayton J. Schmit (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

²⁰ Jana Childers, *Performing the Word: Preaching as Theatre* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 'Seeing Jesus: Preaching as Incarnational Act', in *Purposes of Preaching*, ed. by Jana Childers (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 39-47, 'Making Connections: Preaching as Theatre', *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 4:1 (2005), 1-7, http://www.rjournal.org/vol_4/no_1/childers.html, accessed 25/10/07. This is an online peer reviewed journal.

²¹ Clayton J. Schmit, 'Only Say the Word: The Performatory Power of Preaching and Liturgical Speech', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (1999), 115-129, *Too Deep for Words: A Theology of*

two authors represent respectively the two main acknowledged influences on the writers contributing to the book. One influence is the school of thought associated with Richard Schechner and Victor Turner, where research into theatre and anthropology are combined. The other is the ‘speech act theory’ associated with philosopher J. L. Austin, where some words are understood not simply to be descriptive but performative.²² Although Childers and Schmit cite these as two separate influences, both can be subsumed under the more general interest of performance studies. This said, the distinction does indicate two particular emphases in understanding preaching as performance.

Prior to the publication of *Performance in Preaching* a number of significant and seminal writers can be identified in this field. Charles Rice made an early contribution in, *The Embodied Word: Preaching as Art and Liturgy*, where he puts forward the idea of preaching as art not least in reference to theatre.²³ Consciously and conceptually moving beyond Rice, Richard F. Ward, in a number of books and articles was among the first to promote preaching as performance with explicit reference to performance studies.²⁴ As acknowledged in *Performance and Preaching*, another significant and seminal contributor is Charles L. Bartow, particularly through his work, *God’s Human Speech: A Practical Theology of*

Liturgical Expression: The Power of Preaching, Prayer, and Ritual in Worship (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002).

²² J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962). These influences are clearly acknowledged, Jana Childers and Clayton J. Schmit, ‘Introduction’ in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 13-17, 15.

²³ Charles L. Rice, *The Embodied Word: Preaching as Art and Liturgy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), see also ‘The Theatre and Preaching’, *Journal for Preachers*, 8:1 (1984), 19-25.

²⁴ Richard F. Ward, *Speaking from the Heart: Preaching with Passion* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2001=1992), ‘Performance Turns in Homiletics: Wrong Way or Right On?’, *Journal of Communication and Religion*, 17:1 (1994), 1-11, ‘The Birth of a Performance Perspective: Preaching as a Communicative Art’, *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (1996), 51-60, *Speaking of the Holy: The Art of Communication in Preaching* (Missouri: Chalice Press, 2001), ‘Making a Profession of Faith: On Teaching Performance Studies in a Theological School’, *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2001), 254-263, ‘A Word Emerging: The Promise of Performance Studies for Homiletics’, by Richard Ward and Joanne Buchanan Brown in *Preaching Through Holy Days and Seasons XI*, ed. by Roger Alling and David J. Schlafer (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2003), 111-122. Ward’s contribution to the *Preaching as Performance* collection was on the specific matter of voice rather than on performance in general, ‘Finding Voice in the Theological School’, in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 139-152.

Proclamation.²⁵ In his own concluding contribution to the collection, Bartow argues that the significance of performance studies for preaching is found only as it is brought into the service of the spoken Word in worship.²⁶ These writers have also encouraged the production of papers and discussion on preaching as performance through the 'Performance Studies Workshop' which forms part of the Annual Conference of the Academy of Homiletics. These papers demonstrate a range of perspectives in relation to preaching as performance including drama,²⁷ acting,²⁸ and theology.²⁹ There are, therefore, a number of writers, from a variety of perspectives, associated with the Academy of Homiletics, who have positively appropriated and applied the concept of preaching to performance.³⁰

In addition to the preaching as performance literature associated particularly with the Academy of Homiletics, there are a small number of other authors who positively consider preaching, with varying degrees of scope and depth, in performance terms. These writers do not always indicate the influence of performance studies *per se* but have often had direct experience in the areas of the arts, theatre, and communication. I will make reference to four British authors and one American author. One British writer is Alec Gilmore. He states in his book *Preaching as Theatre*, that the influences on him in trying to understand preaching as theatre were, dissatisfaction with preaching, the discovery of drama, and exposure to television productions.³¹ Colin Morris, in a less academic work, *Raising the Dead: The Art of the Preacher as Public Performer*, acknowledges the influence of his time as Head of Religious

²⁵ Charles L. Bartow, *God's Human Speech: A Practical Theology of Proclamation* (Wm. B. Eerdmans: Cambridge, 1997). His earlier book, *The Preaching Moment* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980), also has some relevance.

²⁶ Charles L. Bartow, 'Performance Study in Service to the Spoken Word in Worship', in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 211-223.

²⁷ LeRoy E. Kennel, 'Preaching as Drama/Drama as Preaching!', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2001), 225-236.

²⁸ Ruthana B. Hooke, "'I am Here in this Room...': The Practice of Performance and the Learning of Preaching", *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2001), 246-253.

²⁹ Lisa Lamb, 'Getting in on the Act: An Evangelical Dialogue With the Performance School in Homiletics', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2005), 142-151.

³⁰ For an explicit application of the performance ideas associated with the Academy of Homiletics to the European context see, Martin Nicol, 'Dramaturgical Homiletic in Germany- preaching as Art Among the Arts', *Homiletic*, 29:2, trans. by Virgil Howard, (2004), 12-19

³¹ Alec Gilmore, *Preaching as Theatre* (London: SCM Press, 1996), i-xiii.

Television at the BBC.³² David Day is another British author who in his related and complementary books, *A Preaching Workbook* and *Embodying the Word*, picks up and develops the theme of preaching as performance.³³ He applies the term, albeit in fairly limited ways, to the interpretation of Scripture and to sermon delivery. In one place, with a focus on comedians and an awareness of ‘a media saturated world’, he states that his intent is to see what can be learned ‘from the communication experts’.³⁴ Finally, in terms of the British authors, Geoffrey Stevenson brings to his study of preaching ‘nearly 20 years’ experience in the theatre as actor and director’.³⁵ Although he does not develop in any detail the theme of preaching as performance he applies his experience not simply to sermon delivery but demonstrates the way in which both preachers and actors are connected in their concern for ‘truthfulness’.³⁶ In addition to these British writers, an American author who writes outwith the Academy of Homiletics and engages in depth with the relationship between preaching and performance is H. Herbert Sennett.³⁷ In his book, *Religion and Dramatics*, he has a chapter entitled, ‘Drama and the Art of Preaching’.³⁸ He has also written a later article entitled ‘Preaching as Performance: A Preliminary Analytical Model’.³⁹ While Sennett is clearly aware of performance studies, his own experience with theatre is one reason why he wishes ‘to show just how theatre can inform the preacher and make him a more effective communicator of the message which he has

³² Colin Morris, *Raising the Dead: The Art of the Preacher as Public Performer* (London: Fount, 1996), 93-96.

³³ David Day, *A Preaching Workbook* (London: SPCK, 1998), 65-75, *Embodying the Word: A Preacher's Guide* (London: SPCK, 2005), 35-49.

³⁴ Day, *Workbook*, 66.

³⁵ Geoffrey Stevenson, ‘The act of delivery’, in Stevenson and Wright, *Preaching*, 82-93, 82. I am aware that Stevenson and Wright are members of the Academy of Homiletics but the point is that these British writers are operating generally outwith the dominant and close association of ideas that the other writers demonstrate in their work.

³⁶ Stevenson, ‘The act’, 82-84.

³⁷ Sennett originally trained to be a high school speech and drama teacher, did graduate work in theatre, served as a minister for six years, taught speech and theatre communication at two Christian Colleges before going on to teach and write scripts full time, Sennett, e-mail correspondence with author, 12/11/07.

³⁸ Herbert Sennett, ‘Drama And The Art of Preaching’, in *Religion and Dramatics: The Relationship Between Christianity and the Theatre Arts* (London: University Press of America, 1995), 75-83.

³⁹ Herbert Sennett, ‘Preaching as Performance: A Preliminary Analytical Model’, *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 2:1 (2003), 141-156, http://www.rjournal.org/vol_2/no_1/sennet.html, accessed 25/10/07.

to deliver’.⁴⁰ In addition, therefore, to the literature produced by writers associated with the Academy of Homiletics, there are a small number of other authors who from a variety of experiences and perspectives positively put forward an understanding of preaching as performance.

2.5. Making Connections

The value of the preaching as performance literature, for this thesis on open-air preaching as radical street performance, is that it provides the immediate homiletical theoretical context for the conceptual approach to the analysis. It does so as the authors establish, demonstrate, and develop, the connections between preaching and the concept of performance. This allows fresh perspectives on preaching to emerge. It also allows negative perceptions regarding the term as applied to preaching to be addressed. Ward, aware of the persistent and pervasive nature of this negative perception, states, ‘The first step in opening up a performance perspective is to redeem the term “performance”’.⁴¹ In what follows, therefore, I will demonstrate by an analytical synthesis of the literature, the various ways in which the preaching as performance writers have made positive connections between the practice of preaching and the concept of performance. In so doing, I identify as important connections made with respect to: the social sciences, etymology, history, Scripture, art, and theology.

2.5.1. Social Sciences

One of the ways in which the preaching as performance authors establish connections between preaching and performance is by drawing on the contributions from the social sciences, including anthropology, communication studies, and sociology. They are directly and indirectly indebted in doing this, to the work of

⁴⁰ Sennett, ‘Drama’, 76.

⁴¹ Ward, *Heart*, 76.

such scholars as Kenneth Burke (1897-1993), Victor Turner (1920-1983), and Dwight Conquergood (1949-2004).⁴² Drawing on the work of such scholars the fundamental assertion by the writers is that human beings are by the very nature of their lives, performing creatures.

Ward cites Conquergood, arguing that despite the pejorative understanding that can be associated with preaching as performance, in nearly every area of the study of human communication, a performance approach is based upon 'a definition of human beings as essentially performing creatures who constitute and sustain their identities and collectively enact their worlds through roles and rituals'.⁴³ In a similar vein, in later work he quotes from performance theorist Ronald J. Pelias who was indebted to Burke:

A 'dramatic' perspective within communication assumes that 'people fundamentally are performing creatures who engage in an ongoing process of giving speech to their thoughts and feelings. Through the act of performing, people make their lives meaningful and define themselves'.⁴⁴

Ward uses this citation as part of his argument regarding 'the dramatic character of human communication'.⁴⁵ This understanding of communication is not mechanistic. Ward understands communication as 'meaning making' through a 'transactional process' with the audience in a given interpretative context.⁴⁶ Within the context of worship, therefore, Ward posits preachers as 'ritual performers', 'holy performers', who within the liturgy seek to enact the communication of the gospel.⁴⁷ In this way, Ward moves from a general understanding of human beings as performing creatures,

⁴² For a brief introduction to these authors and their relationship to performance studies, see Carlson *Performance*, 14-17; Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 24-25.

⁴³ Dwight Conquergood, 'Communication as Performance: Dramaturgical Dimensions of Everyday Life' in *The Jensen Lectures: Contemporary Studies*, ed. by John I. Sisco (Tampa: University of South Florida, 1982), 27, cited Ward, *Heart*, 76.

⁴⁴ Ronald J. Pelias, *Performance Studies: The Interpretation of Aesthetic Texts* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 7, cited in Ward, *Holy*, 22. In chapter 4 of his book Pelias develops 'The Dramatistic Approach' with acknowledged dependence on Burke, 47-63. There is now a revised and expanded edition of the work by Pelias, Ronald J. Pelias and Tracy Stephenson Shaffer, *Performance Studies: The Interpretation of Aesthetic Texts*, 2nd edn (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt, 2007).

⁴⁵ Ward, *Holy*, 22-25.

⁴⁶ Ward, *Holy*, 19-22, 20.

⁴⁷ Ward, *Holy*, 25-29.

to preachers as communicative performers through their words, acts, and actions within the context of worship.

It is Bartow, however, who most explicitly picks up on and develops the phrase ‘*homo performans*’, derived from anthropologist Victor Turner.⁴⁸ He argues, that in the event of preaching God’s revelation as ‘*actio divina*’ and human action, as ‘*homo performans*’, creatively come together.⁴⁹ It is a central idea in his theology of proclamation to which I will return in the discussion about the connection which the writers make between preaching and performance through theology. Its significance is recognised by other writers.⁵⁰ The cumulative impact of these arguments and contributions with reference to the social sciences is that rather than being pejorative, the concept of performance is advanced as describing the act of human communication. To describe preachers as performers, therefore, is to do nothing other than describe their particular roles in relation to the communicative performance of all human beings.

2.5.2. Etymology

Following on from the above, a second way in which preaching as performance writers establish connections between preaching and performance, is with reference to etymology. This is a connection advanced primarily by Ward in several of his writings.⁵¹ It is, however, also picked up by other prominent writers.⁵² Ward, with reference to Conquergood, highlights that the etymology of the word performance, from ‘the Old French *par* + *fournir*’, means literally to ‘carry through to

⁴⁸ Victor Turner, *The Anthropology of Performance* (New York: PAK Publications, 1987), 81, italics Turner.

⁴⁹ Bartow, *God’s*, 60, italics Bartow.

⁵⁰ Alyce M. McKenzie, ‘At the Intersection of *Actio Divina* and *Homo Performans*: Embodiment and Evocation’, in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 53-66.

⁵¹ Ward, *Heart*, 77-78, ‘Performance Turns’, 3, ‘Making a Profession’, 258.

⁵² Bartow, *God’s*, 28; Childers, *Performing*, 28; Schmit, *Too Deep*, 31.

completion'.⁵³ This he claims is precisely what happens in the event of preaching. That which was prepared in the study, is brought to completion through 'vocal and physical action', through the 'self', of the preacher.⁵⁴ He writes, 'Preaching is a performance of the sermon, that is, a vocal and physical action through which the sermon becomes form and image'.⁵⁵ He argues, therefore, that the embodied expression of preaching as an oral-aural event for preacher and congregation is the completion, the performance of the sermon. Preaching, however, he continues, is not simply a performance of a sermon with respect to its 'end' but also in its 'means'.⁵⁶ Again, he refers to etymology. This time he draws attention to a similar but different definition of performance given by Alla Bozarth-Campbell in her work, *The Word's Body*.⁵⁷ There, performance, 'per/formance', is defined as meaning literally 'form coming through'.⁵⁸ He argues, this is precisely what happens in preaching, the 'form' of the sermon as with the form of a poem, as with form of a story, as with the form of a character, comes through the body of the one preaching, reading, telling, acting.⁵⁹ So understood, performance is a concept that simply explains the only way in which a sermon can come to existence and completion. That is, as an oral-aural event en-fleshed through the body of the preacher.

This etymological approach, establishing a connection between performance and preaching, has much to commend it. It emphasises the way in which preaching with other performances requires the embodied oral/aural expression of a text, in order for it to come to life for performers and audiences. On the one hand, this stresses the importance of the preacher as the one who embodies the event. For this reason Ward highlights the importance of the preaching 'persona'.⁶⁰ The preaching persona is how

⁵³ Ward, *Heart*, 77. This argument is based in part upon the definition given by Dwight Conquergood, 'Communication as Performance', 27.

⁵⁴ Ward, *Heart*, 77.

⁵⁵ Ward, *Heart*, 77.

⁵⁶ Ward, *Heart*, 77, italics, Ward.

⁵⁷ Alla Bozarth-Campbell, *The Word's Body: An Incarnational Aesthetic of Interpretation* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1979).

⁵⁸ Ward, *Heart*, 77.

⁵⁹ Ward, *Heart*, 77.

⁶⁰ Ward, *Heart*, 71.

a preacher comes across, that is ‘who’ they come across as, in the performance of preaching.⁶¹ In terms of the rules of ancient rhetoric, he relates this to the ‘ethos’ or the ‘character’ of the speaker, which has to be convincing if the speaker is to be considered ‘worthy of belief’.⁶² To achieve this necessary congruity between person and persona, Ward argues preachers need to bring the ‘individual, private miracle’ of their individuality to the preaching performance.⁶³ In this way, the event will express the genuine embodied engagement of the preacher as person with the Word.⁶⁴ All good actors, he argues, recognise the importance of this self-involvement if the ‘form’ of that which is being performed is to come through convincingly.⁶⁵

Just as the etymological emphasis highlights the importance of the preacher as performer, so it highlights the fact that the preacher is one who is performing a ‘text’. The immediate text with which a preacher deals in preaching is their sermon text. Be this as it may, the preaching as performance writers tend to understand that the primary text being performed is the Scriptures. The ‘form’ which is coming through the preacher as sermon is accordingly understood as an interpretation of the Scriptural text. As Bartow recognises, various interpretations are possible and likely in each ‘fresh’ preaching performance.⁶⁶ Preaching, however, is not simply a matter of performance subjectivity. For it is argued that this would make it a ‘slave’ to the preacher’s self interests which may silence the voices of the marginalised and for ‘justice’, that are present in the Scriptures.⁶⁷ The concern, therefore, is with ‘a faithful engagement of the word and work of Scripture’ through performance.⁶⁸ It is thus argued that while the Scriptural text, like a piece of music, is not itself the work

⁶¹ Ward states that persona refers ‘to who you are when you speak the sermon’, *Heart*, 135, footnote 9, italics Ward. Bartow also discusses the issue of the preacher as one who in preaching is acting as a ‘public persona’, *God’s*, 2, italics Bartow.

⁶² Ward, *Heart*, 65. Here he cites Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, book 1.2:9, see Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. by W. Rhys Roberts (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2004), 7.

⁶³ Ward, *Heart*, 78, see also Morris, *Raising*, 4-10.

⁶⁴ Reference is made to the oft quoted idea by Phillips Brooks that truth comes ‘through the person’, Phillips Brooks, ‘The Two Elements in Preaching’ in *Theories of Preaching*, ed. by Richard Lischer (Durham: Labyrinth Press, 1987), 15, cited Ward, *Heart*, 83.

⁶⁵ Ward, *Heart*, 84-85.

⁶⁶ Bartow, *God’s*, 64.

⁶⁷ Bartow, *God’s*, 66.

⁶⁸ Bartow, *God’s*, 67, Childers, *Performing*, 78, Sennett, ‘Preaching as Performance’, 156,

until performed, yet it ‘is the indispensable cue, the cue we cannot do without’.⁶⁹

The Scripture text is that from which the ‘voice entangled in the words’ will be heard just as music is ‘disentangled’ in performance from the notes on a page.⁷⁰ In this respect:

a text has power, a power granted it by authorial design, to constrain the human spirit and the human voice so that expression of it is not ‘born of impulse or random caprice’.⁷¹

As explicated by Childers, to approach a text in this way concerned for faithful interpretation, involves the commitments of ‘a respect for the text’, ‘an openness to the voice of the text’, ‘a willingness to subordinate his or her will to the text’.⁷² Such a respect for the Scriptural text may be like that expected of a director or actor with regard to any aesthetic text.⁷³ Yet, for preachers as performers, respect for the text is also based upon the authoritative place attributed to Scriptures in the Christian Church.⁷⁴ To describe the preacher as performer, therefore, with respect to the etymological argument, is to point to their dependence upon the Scriptural text and their activity as one of embodied orality.

The etymological connections established between preaching and performance and discussed above, are designed to challenge negative perceptions of preaching understood as performance, highlighting the descriptive nature of the term in relation to that which preachers and other performers actually do. More than this, it is an approach that has potential for exploring both the public persona of the preacher in relation to their personality and the interaction of the preacher with the Scriptural text. In terms of addressing negative perceptions, however, a difficulty is that a specialist understanding of a term may not easily counter the negative associations attached to regular and popular usage of a term. That this is so, is illustrated by the

⁶⁹ Bartow, *God’s*, 64.

⁷⁰ Bartow here cites from and develops the idea of poet Robert Frost, from the record sleeve, *Robert Frost Reads His Poetry*, Caedman Records, 1956, cited *God’s*, 64.

⁷¹ Bartow here refers to S.S. Curry, *The Province of Expression* (Boston: School of Expression, 1891), 151, cited *God’s*, 65.

⁷² Childers, *Performing*, 96-98.

⁷³ Sennett, ‘Preaching’, 156.

⁷⁴ Sennett, ‘Preaching’, 155-156. The way in which different writers understand this authority and how it functions differs but all bring a respect for Scripture as in some way authoritative.

fact that despite Ward making such arguments as early as 1992, a number of the authors writing in 2008, even as they use it, still demonstrate their own wariness and that of others, towards the use of performance to describe preaching.⁷⁵

2.5.3. History

A third way in which a number of the preaching as performance authors seek to establish positive connections between preaching and performance is in relation to history. This is not a major or detailed theme in the writings reviewed. Nonetheless, it is important. For in the church there has been a 'deeply ingrained' historical suspicion towards performance and theatre derived from Plato and from Augustine, the latter of whom it is said considered that theatrical displays involved a 'manifestation of the devil and false gods'.⁷⁶

The approach adopted by the preaching as performance writers in making the positive historical connections between preaching, performance, and history involves demonstrating points of derivation and inter-connection between drama, theatre, and religious ritual. Le Roy E. Kennel, in a paper prepared for the 'Performance Studies Workshop', with reference to the dramatic nature of Greek religious festivals states, 'the histories of religion and drama are so closely related'.⁷⁷ Sennett develops this idea more fully discussing the notion that early Greek and Roman festivals developed from religious ceremonies and rites and were the origins of theatre.⁷⁸ Several writers also refer to connections between the church and theatre based on the

⁷⁵ See for example, Marguerite Shuster, 'The Truth and Truthfulness: Theological Reflections on Preaching and Performance', in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 19-35; John M. Rottman, 'Performative Language and the Limits of Performance in Preaching', in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 67-86;

⁷⁶ Ward, *Heart*, 94. The reference here would appear to be to St Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, trans. by H. Bettenson (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1972), 43-4, 56-8. For an informative discussion of the 'disparate' relationship between Christianity and theatre see, Debra Bruch, 'The Prejudice Against Theatre', *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 3:1 (2004), 1-18, http://rtjournal/vol_3/no_1/bruch.html, accessed 17/10/07.

⁷⁷ Kennel, 'Preaching as Drama', 225-226.

⁷⁸ Sennett, 'A Short History of Religious Drama', *Religion*, 17-28, particularly, 17-22.

theory that in the medieval period following the loss of theatre as ‘a public art form’ it was ‘rediscovered’ in the West through the liturgy and practices of the church. Thus Kennel states, ‘The church (particularly in the tenth century) used drama as a chief means of teaching. Plays were staged before cathedral doors because drama was at home there.’⁷⁹ Rice, with reference to the development of modern theatre suggests that, ‘drama as we know it was born among the preaching friars of the Middle ages’.⁸⁰ Childers draws attention to the dramatic and theatrical nature of the Mass in the Middle Ages with the implication that theatre may have drawn on such liturgical performances.⁸¹ The preaching as performance literature, therefore, seeks to combat the historical basis for antipathy between church and theatre by demonstrating that historically religious ritual has influenced the development of early and later theatre while in turn the church has made use of that which can be described as the dramatic and theatrical.

With reference to the historical case offered in the preaching as performance literature, several things can be said. First, the references made are very limited in length and scope offering a direction rather than a developed case. This is unfortunate if historical prejudices and perceptions still continue in the Christian Church.⁸² Second, while the statements made are based upon established historical theories regarding the nature of the historical relationship between religion and drama and more specifically church and theatre, no particular theory is universally held.⁸³ Third, a useful strategy may have been to give more detailed historical examples of preachers who have demonstrated dramatic and theatrical forms of preaching such as George Whitefield.⁸⁴ All of this said, the preaching as performance

⁷⁹ Kennel, ‘Preaching as Drama’, 226.

⁸⁰ Rice, *Embodied*, 118.

⁸¹ Childers, *Performance*, 125-126. Here Childers draws upon the work of O.B. Hardison, *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages: Essays in the Origin and Early History of Modern Drama* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1965).

⁸² Bruch, ‘The Prejudice Against Theatre’, 17.

⁸³ Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory*, rev. edn (London: Routledge, 1988), 1-7; Laura Friesen, ‘Drama and Religion: The Search for a New Paradigm’, *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 4:1 (2005), 8-15, http://www.rjournal.org/vol_4/no_1/friesen.html, accessed 25/10/07.

⁸⁴ See on this Harry S. Stout, *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Michigan, 1991). An interesting historical article on preaching and performance and somewhat surprising since it is the Puritans who are regarded as having driven the

writers, albeit in a limited way, demonstrate that historically there have been points of connectivity between religious and Christian worship and acts and actions which can be described as the dramatic and theatrical.

2.5.4. Scripture

In addition to making reference to the social sciences, etymology, and history, a major way, in which the preaching as performance writers make connections between preaching and performance, is with reference to Scripture. The particular approaches they take to this are several and influenced by their own particular convictions regarding the nature of Scripture and how it functions authoritatively. Be this as it may, two broad lines of approach are observable in terms of how the writers appeal to Scripture in order to validate understanding preaching in performance terms.

The first line of approach refers to the content of Scripture as example. In keeping with this approach, Rice argues for the artistic nature of preaching and worship by drawing attention to the ‘artistic’ nature of Jesus’ parables.⁸⁵ This is also a theme developed, in a more popular but not insignificant or ill-informed way, by Morris in his presentation of the dynamic, live, and vivid performance of Jesus as ‘the perfect preacher’.⁸⁶ Morris also goes on to refer to the teaching of the Apostle Paul. He states that, ‘The Apostle Paul told the church at Corinth that to follow Christ is to become a *theatron*’ and that while this word can be translated as ‘spectacle’, ‘the term’s association with the London Palladium is irresistible’ and so ‘the preacher cannot avoid being a *theatron*, a public spectacle, for preaching is one of the performing arts.’⁸⁷ Ward also picks up on Paul’s relationship with the church at Corinth. He develops it in a different way. He gives attention to the rhetorical nature of the

greatest wedge between preaching and theatre is the article by Francis Bremer and Ellen Rydell ‘Performance Art? Puritans in the Pulpit’, *History Today*, 45:9 (1995), 50-54.

⁸⁵ Rice, *Embodied*, 71-91.

⁸⁶ Morris, *Raising*, 33-39.

⁸⁷ Morris, *Raising*, 88, italics, Morris.

second epistle and highlights what he describes as Paul's 'counter performance' at Corinth, as he challenged his opponents.⁸⁸ For other writers, the example of Scripture with respect to performance is found in the drama of particular events narrated in Scripture. Mary Donovan Turner, for example, in an essay entitled 'Reversal of Fortune', with explicit reference to what she considers to be the prophetic performance of Miriam as expressed in Exodus 15:20-21, encourages the contemporary enactment of practices that 'stimulate hope and empower people to move ahead'.⁸⁹ Some preaching as performance writers go beyond highlighting particular instances of performances found in Scripture. Rather, with reference to 'the dramatic' as involving a resolution of conflict, they draw attention to the biblical narrative of salvation as a whole as a dramatic performance.⁹⁰ A number of authors, therefore, refer to the dramatic content they find in Scripture in order to support a performance approach to preaching in keeping with the example found therein.

The second approach, by which preaching as performance writers make connections between the notion of preaching as performance and Scripture, is with reference to the nature of Scripture as consisting of texts intended for oral/aural performances. It is argued that the biblical literature was intended to be spoken and heard, and consists of 'arrested performances' that require to be performed again in order to be given living voice.⁹¹ This performance occurs in preaching. It also requires, however, that the preacher understands and exegetes the text with attention to its rhetorical form and function and by reading and hearing it spoken out loud. Ronald J. Allen picks up on these themes in an essay 'Performance and the New Testament in Preaching'.⁹² He puts forward two particularly interesting ideas about preaching as the performance of biblical texts. The first, with reference to the earlier cited

⁸⁸ Ward, *Heart*, 52-57,

⁸⁹ Mary Donovan Turner, 'Reversal of Fortune: The Performance of a Prophet', in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 87-98.

⁹⁰ See on this Childers, *Performing*, 42, Kennel, 'Preaching', 225-256, Lamb, 'Getting', 143-145.

⁹¹ The expression 'arrested performances' is derived from Beverly Whitaker Long and Mary Francis Hopkins, *Performing Literature: An Introduction to Oral Interpretation* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1982), 2 and is cited in various preaching as performance works, see for example Bartow, *God's*, 64; Childers, *Performing*, 49-50.

⁹² Ronald J. Allen, 'Performance and the New Testament in Preaching', Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 99-116.

comments by Ward about Paul writing to Corinth is that at times a preacher may be required to offer ‘a counter-performance to previous performances attested in the Bible or the Christian tradition’.⁹³ The second, with a mediated reference to the work of Walter J. Ong, is that the oral performance of a text in preaching, in some respects, is a unique, particularly suited, and deeply human way for people to be brought together in an encounter with a sacred text.⁹⁴ The preaching as performance writers, therefore, in referring to Scripture, in order to demonstrate the suitability and applicability of performance as a concept for understanding preaching, establish connections not simply with the content of Scripture but with the nature of Scripture.

2.5.5. Art

Another important correlation the preaching as performance writers establish between preaching and performance, is in relation to the artistic nature of the practice. They posit preaching not simply as a form of communication but as a form of artistic or aesthetic communication. ‘Art’ like performance can be a ‘contested’ or as Lisa Lamb expresses it, a ‘slippery’ term.⁹⁵ What does or does not constitute art can be dependent upon a number of variable and integrated factors. Schechner points out that some ‘cultures do not have a word for, or category called “art” even though they create performances and objects demonstrating a highly developed aesthetic sense realized with consummate skill’.⁹⁶ Ward indicates awareness of the difficulties in describing preaching as artistic communication when he writes:

All forms of human speech are *potentially* aesthetic, depending on how the speaker intends communication, what the definition of ‘art’ is in a particular culture, and how it is received by an audience.⁹⁷

⁹³ Allen, ‘Performance’, 107.

⁹⁴ Allen, ‘Performance’, 116. Here Allen cites Werner Kelber, *The Oral and the Written Gospel: The Hermeneutics of Speaking and Writing in the Synoptic Tradition, Mark, Paul, and Q*, new edn (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 146. Kelber, however, is quoting Ong and although Allen does not give the reference it can be found in Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982), 74-75.

⁹⁵ Lamb, ‘Getting’, 143. It is Carlson who discusses performance as a ‘contested concept’, *Performance*, 1.

⁹⁶ Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 32.

⁹⁷ Ward, *Holy*, 22, italics Ward.

This notwithstanding, Ward and the other preaching as performance writers promote preaching as artistic performance in two main inter-related ways which I depict as, Artistic Presentation and Artistic Communication. The first of these draws comparisons between the practice of preaching and the nature of other forms of artistic performance. The second focuses primarily on the artistic nature of the language used.

2.5.5.1. Artistic Presentation

The first way, in which the preaching as performance writers advance preaching as artistic performance, is by drawing comparisons between the practice of preaching and of other performance art forms. A variety of comparisons are made. The dominant analogues, however, are theatre and music. Such analogues and comparisons undergird much of the preaching as performance writing. I have identified a number of main areas where the writers make connections between preaching and other such performance art forms.

One main area where preaching is associated with other performing art forms is with respect to the public presentational nature of the practice. Preachers, Morris opines, like other performers on a stage, have to face people, look them in the eye, and project themselves in such a way that can ‘interest, create expectancy and hold the attention of their hearers’.⁹⁸ With deeper analysis, Sennett makes two particularly interesting comparisons between the live performance of preachers and other performers, particularly actors in a theatre. The first is that they have to perform regularly ‘on demand’. The second is that they have to perform in keeping with the ‘conventions’ of the expected performance.⁹⁹

The latter theme of expectation and conventions highlighted by Sennett is developed independently by Schmit. He does so in relation to music.¹⁰⁰ He argues that it is the

⁹⁸ Morris, *Raising*, 88 and 89.

⁹⁹ Sennett, ‘Preaching’, 143. In the comparison he draws between preaching and other performances he also mentions ‘rehearsal’ and use of a ‘script’, two features that I will also discuss.

¹⁰⁰ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’ 181-185.

knowledge of conventions that allows a musician in playing and an audience in listening to know ‘what comes next’.¹⁰¹ This enables through the features of ‘inevitability’ and ‘anticipation’ a piece to be brought to satisfactory conclusion in relation to its genre. This is the case, even when there has been improvisation such as in Jazz.¹⁰² Likewise, he claims, that if a sermon is not to be considered ‘preachy’, by which he means ‘moralistic’, then it needs to unfold to the movement of the plan of salvation.¹⁰³ This is in keeping, he argues, with the theological convention that there should be a proper balance between gospel and judgement.¹⁰⁴ What this interesting idea lacks, however, is the recognition that in different church traditions the conventions and expectations of what constitutes a ‘good sermon’ will be different. Be this as it may, one area in which the preaching as performance writers establish connections between preaching and performance, with respect to art, is its nature as public presentation, with attendant demands, related to audience expectations.

A second area, where preaching is associated with, at least certain artistic performances, is in the way that preachers require to express themselves through voice and body. Bartow, with reference first to T.S. Eliot and then to William Brower, on the theme of how to ‘speak’ literature, states that ‘vocal and physical gesture’ is necessary, in order that the ‘blood turned to ink’ in writing, be once more turned to blood, in performance.¹⁰⁵ Ward emphasises that preaching is a completely embodied form of expression. He writes, ‘As a form of human expressive speech, preaching itself can be viewed as oral, visual, and kinesthetic action’.¹⁰⁶ Correspondingly, some of the authors such as Childers, sometimes with direct reference to actors, write and instruct on the physical aspects of voice and body in delivery.¹⁰⁷ It is significant in terms of indicating the importance the writers give to

¹⁰¹ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 181.

¹⁰² Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 181-185.

¹⁰³ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 187.

¹⁰⁴ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 185.

¹⁰⁵ Bartow, *God’s*, 63-64.

¹⁰⁶ Ward, *Holy*, 18.

¹⁰⁷ Childers, *Performing*, 57-77, 114-116. See also Geoffrey Stevenson, ‘The act of delivery’ and ‘Communication and communion’, in Stevenson and Wright, *Preaching*, 82-93 and 94-107, respectively.

the physical use of body and voice that the recent work, *Performance in Preaching*, contains not only a chapter by Todd Farley an Associate Professor of Speech and Drama, entitled ‘The Use of the Body in the Performance of Proclamation’, but also a DVD which contains practical performance exercises and techniques.¹⁰⁸ Preachers, therefore, are compared to other artistic performers, particularly actors, in the way they express themselves through voice and body.

A third connection which is made between preachers and other artistic performers is in relation to their use of a text. I have made some reference to this in the discussion on etymology. Its importance, however, justifies further discussion particularly in relation to the way in which a preacher’s approach to their text corresponds to that of other performing artists. Bartow, with reference to theatrical plays, argues that a text places certain claims on the performer. If these claims are not adhered to, playwrights may justifiably be annoyed by a rendition of their work that does not represent their authorial intent. To be sure, various deconstructive approaches can be taken to any text. This, however, Bartow claims, is a performance of the ‘critical assessment’ and not the text.¹⁰⁹

Childers picks up this theme of interpreting a text and in applying it to preaching she states that actors know what is required in order to give an ‘authentic’ and ‘honest’ rendition of a text.¹¹⁰ She says that this involves them in bringing themselves and their experience fully into engagement with it.¹¹¹ As explicated by other writers, it is this personal, emotional, and truthful engagement of a performer with a text that means that it has the potential to speak truth to others.¹¹² It is also this which as in preaching, means that each performance is original.¹¹³ Yet, it is argued that this should not mean that the ‘voice of the text’ is lost. Childers opines:

¹⁰⁸ Todd Farley, ‘The Use of the Body in the Performance of Proclamation’, in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 117-138.

¹⁰⁹ Bartow, *God’s*, 65.

¹¹⁰ Childers, *Performing*, 51.

¹¹¹ Childers, *Performing*, 51-52.

¹¹² Stevenson, ‘The act’, 82-83.

¹¹³ Ward, *Heart*, 27.

The artist preacher is one who is willing to enter into a profound partnership with the text. The faithful preacher strives for a process of dialogue, discovery, and synthesis with the text; mastery, dominance and penetration of the text are eschewed. The resulting sermons are as full of the voice and life of the text as they are full of the voice and personality of the preacher.¹¹⁴

She is clear that to achieve this, preachers have to make disciplined use of physical, mental, and spiritual skills.¹¹⁵ Preachers can learn from actors the importance of ‘concentration’, ‘observation’, and ‘imagination’.¹¹⁶ In addition they require artistic creativity.¹¹⁷ This is a theme Childers develops more fully in her recent essay, ‘The Preacher’s Creative Process’.¹¹⁸ She theologically rounds the circle by arguing that creativity is not simply an artistic but a theological act. This is a point made with reference to the theological lexicon shared by preachers and artists alike not least in respect to the creative process.¹¹⁹ The preaching as performance writers, therefore, present preachers as like other artistic performers in their need to present simultaneously original and faithful performances.

A fourth main area, where the preaching as performance writers correlate the practice of preaching with other artistic performances is in relation to preparation. Rice writes, ‘No performance can succeed without preparation, on the stage, in the concert hall, or in the pulpit.’¹²⁰ This can be practically necessary.¹²¹ For the preaching as performance writers, however, it has greater significance. Bartow again takes the lead in terms of theory. This can be summarised as follows. Texts are ‘arrested performances’. In order to be understood, therefore, let alone in order to be delivered publicly, they require to be performed. To interpret texts through a performance ensures that when in turn they are publicly performed as interpretation, the content and the form are matched.¹²² Such an approach makes possible varied interpretations

¹¹⁴ Childers, *Performing*, 95.

¹¹⁵ Childers, *Performing*, 52.

¹¹⁶ Childers, *Performing*, 103-111.

¹¹⁷ Childers, *Performing*, 52-56, 100-103.

¹¹⁸ Jana Childers, ‘The Preacher’s Creative Process’, in Childers and Schmit, *Performance*, 153-168.

¹¹⁹ Childers, *Performing*, 21-24.

¹²⁰ Rice, *Embodied*, 134.

¹²¹ Shuster, ‘Truth and Truthfulness’, 30.

¹²² Bartow, ‘Turning Ink into Blood’, *God’s*, 53-93. See also McKenzie, ‘At the Intersection’ for comment and a citation from one of Bartow’s unpublished class papers, 60-61.

‘accountable to the texts themselves’.¹²³ In line with this, Childers claims that, ‘performance is one of the preacher’s most valuable exegetical tools’.¹²⁴ In a chapter entitled the ‘Performance of the Word’, she gives advice on how so to read the Scriptures.¹²⁵

Schmit develops the theme of preparation in a fresh way. He uses the analogue of music. Music is an ‘externalised activity’ of ‘outward expression’.¹²⁶ Such performance, however, is inextricably related to earlier internalised preparation. This involves ‘perception’ and ‘selection’ and then through rehearsal ‘revision’. These are not the event of public performance. Yet, ‘they are critical to the successful performance of the piece’.¹²⁷ Likewise, such elements form part of sermon preparation. They are ‘the necessary base on which a meaningful sermon event is constructed’.¹²⁸ He makes the interesting suggestion that not only should preachers read out loud and practise body movements but that they should take their ‘rehearsal’ script into the pulpit which with its marks and notations aids ‘aural, visual, and kinesthetic memory’.¹²⁹ Such practice and preparation as with musicians also helps form the habits that allow preachers to improvise as necessary.¹³⁰ It would appear that for Schmit, the fact that preparatory processes are associated with such an established artistic form as music should have the effect of encouraging preachers to see that preparation adds to rather than detracts from preaching in its essential performance nature.¹³¹

With reference to the public nature of the event, embodied expression, skill-full interpretation, and the importance of preparation, the preaching as performance

¹²³ Bartow, ‘Performance Study’, 220.

¹²⁴ Childers, *Performing*, 49, see also her chapter ‘Performing the Text’, 78-98.

¹²⁵ Childers, *Performing*, 78-98.

¹²⁶ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 169-181.

¹²⁷ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 179.

¹²⁸ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 179.

¹²⁹ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 187-188.

¹³⁰ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 184.

¹³¹ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 179.

writers, therefore, draw comparisons with the practice of preaching and other artistic performances. Some comparisons are certainly not exact. This is inevitable because preaching is a particular form of performance. One area which lacks nuanced discussion, however, is the difference between performing the Scriptures as a text and the sermon manuscript as the performance text. In addition, where a sermon manuscript is used it is not used in the same way as actors use the script of a play. Be this as it may, preachers like other artistic performers have to present in public and through their embodied presentations express their engagement with the materials pertinent to their art form. That for preachers, such material is words and language, is the focus of the second main way in which the preaching as performance writers establish a connection between preaching and art.

2.5.5.2. *Artistic Communication*

The second main way in which the preaching as performance writers establish a connection between preaching and performance in relation to art, is with reference to the way in which preaching is artistic communication. Art is understood by various writers from Rice to Childers, as something which can embrace ambiguity, express deep human emotion, and modify consciousness through the use of symbols and images.¹³² Schmit, however, brings the most recent explanation of the understanding of art found in many of the writers. He argues that art is ‘the expression of what the artist knows about the inner life; the presentation of the artist’s imagination of human feeling’.¹³³ As the artist expresses this in symbols, the art simultaneously resonates with people and enables them to see things in a new way.¹³⁴ Critically for the comparison, he and the other writers argue that language can also function in this artistic way. It does so in its ‘poetic’ and ‘presentational’ rather than ‘discursive’ function.¹³⁵ This is so because in its discursive function language seeks ‘to convey information’. In its poetic function, however, language seeks to ‘stimulate feelings and attitudes in the hearers’.¹³⁶

¹³² Rice, *Embodied*, 93-103; Childers, *Performing*, 37.

¹³³ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 11.

¹³⁴ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 11-13.

¹³⁵ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 13.

¹³⁶ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 88.

Ward articulates what this understanding of language means for preaching:

When we are describing preaching as art, we point to the way that a preacher leads her or his listeners into an experience of the Word through the use of language and imagery, designing the sermon into a coherent and organic whole.¹³⁷

For the preaching as performance writers, therefore, artistic communication in preaching has two features. The first is that it uses language in a range of connotative and imaginative ways in relation to such as story, metaphor, and simile.¹³⁸ The second is that by doing so, it seeks to bring about transformation in the listeners by leading them into a new experience in the light of their encounter with the Word. In keeping with this understanding, Childers writes that through artistic preaching the imagination is called into play and something is offered in which the congregation can participate through ‘resonance’, ‘identification’, and ‘empathy’.¹³⁹ The aspiration is to make something ‘happen’ for the listener.¹⁴⁰ Happen as an experiential event of the complete person.¹⁴¹ Ward describes this with reference to storytelling as a leading ‘into other realms of experience’ with the goal of granting ‘the listener a fuller sense of self and the world’.¹⁴² As explicated by some of the writers this new sense of the world may be a discomfiting rather than comforting experience, as with the ‘shattering’ and ‘world-dismantling’ power of parables.¹⁴³ Through such revelation, however, God can ‘press us into his service’.¹⁴⁴ Childers describes such preaching as:

facilitating openness: creating a space where the listeners can be open to change, shaping a moment when the congregation can say a yes or a no that comes from more than the cerebrum. The purpose of lively preaching might be illumination or encounter or epiphany. It might be absorption or communion or annunciation

¹³⁷ Ward, *Holy*, 7.

¹³⁸ Schmit thus compares the preacher to the poet and gives advice on a range of poetic devices and figures of speech including , metonymy, synecdoche, and metaphor, *Too Deep*, 83-114. From the perspective of rhetoric McClure discusses the difference between the discursive and poetic nature in relation to its ‘denotative’ and ‘connotative’ functions, McClure, *Four Codes*, 52-92.

¹³⁹ Childers, *Performing*, 37, on resonance, identification, and participation. See also Sennett, ‘Drama and the Art of Preaching’, 76-77 and Lamb, ‘Getting in on the Act’, 144-145.

¹⁴⁰ Ward, *Heart*, 24, Gilmour, *Preaching*, 7.

¹⁴¹ Childers, *Performing*, 39. Gilmour writing about his turn to theatre states, ‘I never quite grasped the point that my listeners were people before they were brains. A whole dimension was missing’, Gilmour, *Preaching*, x.

¹⁴² Ward, *Heart*, 36.

¹⁴³ Rice, *Embodied*, 71-91, 78.

¹⁴⁴ Bartow, *God’s*, 49.

or transformation. What do lively sermons do? They open, draw and hold people, creating a moment for God to move in.¹⁴⁵

For the preaching as performance writers, therefore, artistic communication is preaching that uses language in symbolic and poetic ways with the goal of facilitating transformation through divine encounter.

The connection that the writers establish at this point between preaching and art is problematic. Quite simply, what is described may not be people's regular experience of the nature and practice of preaching. In addition, it may not be the kind of language that a congregation expects to be used to communicate truth. They may expect denotative language. Where this is the case rather than helping facilitate encounter artistic language as described may hinder communication. For understanding the perspective of the preaching as performance writers, therefore, it is important to note that in the background to this connection between preaching and performance is the contribution of the writers associated with the 'New Homiletic', who encouraged preachers to understand and practice preaching in such artistic ways.¹⁴⁶ This debt is acknowledged by the preaching as performance writers.¹⁴⁷ There is also some acknowledgement that not all preaching is like this.¹⁴⁸

The emphasis that the preaching as performance writers put on the artistic use of language, therefore, is as much an aspiration as a description. It is an aspiration, however, for which they seek to give a theological rationale. This rationale relates to the argument that artistic language is required to express the sacred and the holy precisely because it is seeking to communicate the inexpressible nature of God and

¹⁴⁵ Childers, *Performing*, 34-35.

¹⁴⁶ The term the 'New Homiletic' is somewhat unclear both as to its origins and to its precise meaning. For some discussion and definitions of what constitutes the New Homiletic, Paul Scott Wilson, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory* (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2004), 135-137. In relation to the discussion at this point, however, the initial definition by John S. McClure is helpful where he writes, 'A homiletic movement dating from the late 1960's through mid-1980's that turned away from rational-cognitive models of homiletics and pursued homiletical models grounded in dialogue, narrative, induction, and imagination', *Preaching Words: 144 Key Terms in Homiletics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), 94.

¹⁴⁷ Nicol, 'Dramaturgical', 12; Alyce M. McKenzie, 'At the Intersection', 53-54, 56.

¹⁴⁸ Ward, *Holy*, 7, citing Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Preaching as Theology and Art* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984, 52.

the experience of God in human lives.¹⁴⁹ Schmit is the writer who develops this furthest. He argues that art involves the creation of symbols that articulate ‘forms of human experience which are too deep for words’.¹⁵⁰ Consequently, artistic expression and language is essential to worship and preaching for it deals with that which is ‘ineffable’.¹⁵¹ It is through such aesthetic presentation, that ‘the hidden One’ is made known and present in worship.¹⁵² When the preaching as performance writers make connections, therefore, between preaching and performance on the grounds of the nature of artistic communication, they do so with a particular understanding of the practice of preaching. This may not be everyone’s experience of preaching. It is, however, what they consider to be a valid if not necessary approach.

2.5.6. Theology

In addition to establishing connections between preaching and performance with reference to the social sciences, etymology, history, Scripture, and art, the preaching as performance writers also make reference to theology. Again as with Scripture, the writers approach this from the varied perspectives of their own theological convictions. Evident, however, are strong references to the doctrine of the incarnation, for providing a theological understanding of the nature of preaching as a performance event.

Childers, in advocating a ‘lively homiletic’ begins from the conviction that ‘*Preaching is a theological event*’.¹⁵³ She highlights the shared ‘lexicon’ of terminology between preaching, theology, and art, and points to writing by Tillich and Moltmann as offering trajectories of theological validation. She does not, however, develop this beyond stated general connection.¹⁵⁴ Lamb makes reference

¹⁴⁹ Rice, *Embodied*, 94 and 96; Bartow, *God’s*, 60.

¹⁵⁰ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 25.

¹⁵¹ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 25.

¹⁵² Schmit, *Too Deep*, 39.

¹⁵³ Childers, *Performing*, 21, italics Childers.

¹⁵⁴ Childers, *Performing*, 21-24.

to the theo-dramatic work of Hans Urs Von Balthasar and to the writing of Kevin J. Vanhoozer.¹⁵⁵ Schmit appeals to theological presuppositions of Karl Barth, regarding ‘the presence and activity of God in preaching as its source, content, and life’.¹⁵⁶ Elsewhere reference, albeit in passing, is made to liturgical theologies as establishing the context in which the preacher as performer is a ‘holy performer’.¹⁵⁷ These indicated trajectories offer a variety of theological possibilities and support for a performance approach to preaching. None of the authors, however, fully develop them as a performance theology. Schmit does seek to bring the philosophy of art and theological ideas together but acknowledges that this ‘Theology of Liturgical Expression’ does not constitute ‘a fully developed system’.¹⁵⁸ In addition this ‘theology’ has a strongly anthropocentric emphasis. For the focus on artistic expression in worship is less about what God does for us and what we do for God, and more to do with what we do for one another.¹⁵⁹ The above discussion notwithstanding, the primary theological understanding advanced in promoting preaching as performance relates to the doctrine of the incarnation.

Various preaching as performance writers, appeal to the doctrine of the incarnation in advancing preaching as performance. Rice refers to the incarnation as the basis for establishing the relationship between the church and the arts.¹⁶⁰ More directly, Ward, drawing on the work of Bozarth-Campbell, points to the way in which a message expressed through the body of the preacher can be considered an act of ‘incarnation’.¹⁶¹ In turn, if performance is incarnation, then it is a ‘performance consciousness that lives at the very heart of Christian revelation’.¹⁶² Later

¹⁵⁵ Lamb, ‘Getting’, 142.

¹⁵⁶ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 55-56.

¹⁵⁷ Ward, ‘The Birth’, 59-60.

¹⁵⁸ Schmit, *Too Deep*, xiii.

¹⁵⁹ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 63-65.

¹⁶⁰ Rice, *Embodied*, 96.

¹⁶¹ Ward, ‘Performance Turns’, 3. For Alla Bozarth-Campbell, incarnation is the term that describes the coming together of a piece of literature as a ‘real being’ and the human interpreter as a ‘real being’ to create something new in the meeting, *Word’s*, 2-3.

¹⁶² Ward, ‘Performance Turns’, 3.

developments of Ward's thinking involve integrating the concepts of 'Voice', 'Presence' and congregation into this incarnational understanding and so he writes:

An integrated theology of Word, Voice, and Presence emphasizes the incarnational aspect of preaching that values the collaboration between God's Spirit, the humanity of the preacher, and the active participation of the congregation in making sense of the preaching event.¹⁶³

Ruthana B. Hooke argues that embodied performance is not only necessary and unavoidable but that to communicate in this way is to communicate in accordance with the paradigmatic revelation of God in Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁴

Of all the preaching as performance writers it is Bartow who develops the theological understanding of the performance of preaching as a divine/human event in keeping with the divine/human nature of God's self-performance, in Jesus Christ. He states, 'Jesus Christ...is not only the definitive locus of *actio divina*, he is also the locus of *homo performans*. True humanity is found in him'.¹⁶⁵ In turn, when preachers come as *homo performans* to the Scriptures to preach, they can expect a meeting with the *actio divina* in 'a conflagration of love'.¹⁶⁶ It is not just the preacher who comes as *homo performans* but also the congregation in the act of listening. When the preacher and congregation come together, therefore, in engagement with the performance of the Scriptures, they 'come face to face with the self-disclosure of the divine'.¹⁶⁷

Bartow states it like this:

Homo performans as the self-performance of preachers and congregants comes up against the Word of God sent, the *actio-divina/homo-performans* that is Christ. In that meeting what we would be is transformed into what God would have us be.¹⁶⁸

For Bartow, therefore, the incarnational concept of the meeting of the human and the divine is central not only for God's prior self-performance in Christ but in turn to the preaching event. Consequently, the incarnational event, he argues, is that to which

¹⁶³ Ward, 'Making', 258.

¹⁶⁴ Hooke, 'I Am Here', 249.

¹⁶⁵ Bartow, *God's*, 95, italics Bartow.

¹⁶⁶ Bartow, *God's*, 96.

¹⁶⁷ Bartow, *God's*, 122.

¹⁶⁸ Bartow, *God's*, 122

‘ultimate accountability’ has to be given in appropriating performance and performance studies for understanding preaching and worship.¹⁶⁹

Along with the arguments from the social sciences and etymology this incarnational understanding of preaching as performance is a fundamental concept variously apparent in a number of the preaching as performance writers, particularly those directly associated with the Academy of Homiletics.¹⁷⁰ Some writers have begun to develop this in interesting and promising ways. Marguerite Shuster, with reference to the work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Emil Brunner argues for a relational understanding of the nature of truth, something achieved through the embodied performance of the live spoken word.¹⁷¹ Wilson, in ‘Preaching, Performance, and the Life and Death of “Now”’, picks up on the theme of ‘*kenosis*’ with reference to Philippians 2:5-7.¹⁷² While not developed by Wilson this could be related to the ‘enslavement’ that artists feel towards their art.¹⁷³ Going further and with reference to Alla Renée Bozarth, and her work on the interpretation of aesthetic texts, he argues that the self emptying that occurs does not mean that the person ceases to be a person but that they lay down ego-centrism. This laying down, however, is simultaneously accompanied by a ‘*plerosis*’, a being filled, so that the ‘real self’ can engage with a text.¹⁷⁴ Wilson compares this directly to the self-emptying and Christ filling that occurs through the meeting of *homo performans* and *actio divina* in the performance of the Scripture.¹⁷⁵ The doctrine of the incarnation, therefore, is a key doctrine by which a number of authors develop the theological basis and understanding of preaching as performance.

¹⁶⁹ Bartow, ‘Performance Study’, 215.

¹⁷⁰ For this acknowledgement see for example, McKenzie, ‘At the Intersection’, 53-66, and Childers, ‘The Preacher’s Creative Process’, 155.

¹⁷¹ Marguerite Shuster, ‘Truth and Truthfulness’, 22-23.

¹⁷² Scott Wilson, ‘Preaching, Performance’, 48, italics Scott Wilson.

¹⁷³ Morris cites the cellist Pablo Casals who stated ‘Dedication to one’s art does involve a form of enslavement’, taken from McElvaney, *Preaching from Camelot to Covenant* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 102, cited by Morris, *Raising*, 3.

¹⁷⁴ Wilson, ‘Preaching, Performance’, italics Scott Wilson, 49. He cites, Alla Renée Bozarth, *The Word’s Body: An Incarnational Aesthetic of Interpretation* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1997=1979), 86. This is a reprint of the previously cited work under the name of Alla Bozarth-Campbell.

¹⁷⁵ Wilson, ‘Preaching, Performance’, italics Wilson, 49.

2.5.7. Summary

In this thesis, I am exploring open-air preaching with reference to the concept of performance. Performance is a concept that has a number of persistent negative associations when applied to the practice of preaching. A number of authors, however, seek to redeem the term as suitable for its application to preaching. Through an analytical synthesis of their work, I have demonstrated that they establish, with varying degrees of success, connections between preaching and performance with reference to the social sciences, etymology, history, Scripture, art, and theology. Such connections may not remove all the objections, particularly from those who do not operate within the discipline of performance studies and its eclectic and integrative nature.¹⁷⁶ Objections can have the positive result of ensuring that claims regarding preaching as performance remain self-critical. Such is apparent in some of the writing. This said, accepting limitations, the preaching as performance writers advance the suitability of preaching understood as performance and the potential of such with reference to a number of important areas. These writers provide the academic homiletical theoretical context for analysing open-air preaching as performance. For a number of reasons, however, the understandings of preaching as performance as advanced by these authors is inadequate for understanding and analysing open-air preaching as performance. In continuing my review of the literature, I will now describe and discuss these reasons.

2.6. *Limitations in Approach*

Despite the contribution that the preaching as performance writers make towards understanding preaching in performance terms the conceptual understanding as described is inadequate in a number of ways for analysing open-air preaching in performance terms. In relation to the practice of open-air preaching, this is a result of the authors operating with a limited understanding of preaching on the one hand and a limited understanding of performance on the other. These limitations with respect

¹⁷⁶ A point made by Paul Scott Wilson, 'Preaching Performance', 37-38.

to open-air preaching relate to the focus of the writers on in-church preaching and in-building performances.

2.6.1. A Limited Understanding of Preaching

Preaching, as a practice that occurs in the context of a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly, is the dominant understanding undergirding the work of the preaching as performance authors. As acknowledged in chapter 1, in relation to general homiletical literature, this assumption is understandable. Liturgical assembly is the context in which preaching regularly occurs in the Global North. Subsequently, however, this dominant context is accepted without question. It becomes indivisibly integral to the theories and theologies of preaching advanced by the writers. Consequentially, in a number of areas, this limits the applicability of their proposals to other expressions of preaching, such as open-air preaching, which does not occur in this assumed and theoretically integral context. This limited focus and its consequences with respect to open-air preaching can be demonstrated with reference to a number of examples.

For Rice, in his advocacy of preaching as art, the liturgical context of preaching is critical, because preaching is one liturgical act among others.¹⁷⁷ By liturgical context he includes the recognised role of the preacher, the architecture of the building, the accompanying acts of worship, and the role of the congregation. The relationship of preaching to such liturgical assembly is not simply a matter of regular practice but as he states, of ‘ecclesiology’.¹⁷⁸ Preaching which does not take place in this context is a ‘disembodied Word’.¹⁷⁹ It is not ‘authentic’ preaching at all.¹⁸⁰ Included in the examples which he gives of such inauthentic preaching is open-air preaching.¹⁸¹ From the perspective of ecclesiology, Rice highlights such issues as the relationship

¹⁷⁷ Rice, *Embodied*, 49-70.

¹⁷⁸ Rice, *Embodied*, 31-32.

¹⁷⁹ Rice, *Embodied*, 41-47.

¹⁸⁰ Rice, *Embodied*, 25.

¹⁸¹ Rice, *Embodied*, 29.

of preaching to other liturgical acts and to the believing community. This, however, begs the question as to whose ecclesiology? In terms of critique, Lamb rightly highlights from an evangelical and confessedly 'low-church' position, that a large number of the preaching as performance authors are associated with 'high church' and liturgical traditions.¹⁸² This is not to completely deny the validity or applicability of what a writer such as Rice says on the matter of preaching as performance. It is, however, to indicate that his understanding of preaching as performance, in relation to art, is advanced within a particular liturgically based understanding of the relationship between Word and Sacrament. Consequently, this is an understanding, which renders preaching which takes place in other contexts, such as open-air preaching, inauthentic by definition and thus not preaching as artful performance as he understands it.

Another example of the way in which the preaching as performance writers explicitly advance their understanding of preaching as performance in relation to specifically in-church preaching, is evidenced in the work of Ward. For Ward the 'performance of the liturgy' is the context in which preaching occurs and in which the preacher communicates as a 'holy performer'.¹⁸³ It is into the gaps created in the liturgy by the pull of worship against the realities of everyday life that the preacher places their own embodied performances of the Word. It is there that such actions will be broken by a Holy God to become a means of speaking of the Holy.¹⁸⁴ As expressed, this is an understanding that appears to have little place for the expression of the 'holy' through such preaching as that carried out by the naked 'holy fool' street preachers described by Campbell. For these preachers performed against the liturgy and its conventions.¹⁸⁵ Again, the argument here is not that Ward does not accurately or helpfully describe the regular practice of preaching as that which occurs in the context of the liturgy. Rather, it is that by depending upon liturgical theologies to support his understanding of preaching as performance, he minimises the applicability of that understanding to preaching that occurs outwith this context.

¹⁸² Lamb, 'Getting', 142-151.

¹⁸³ Ward, *Holy*, 28.

¹⁸⁴ Ward, *Holy*, 28-29.

¹⁸⁵ Campbell, 'The Preacher as Ridiculous Person', 149-158.

A further example of the way in which the preaching as performance authors integrate the regular context of preaching into their theories and theologies of preaching as performance, can be demonstrated with reference to their use of J. L. Austin and ‘speech-act theory’.¹⁸⁶ For example, Schmit seeks to demonstrate the way in which words preached in the context of worship have the performative power to do things.¹⁸⁷ For writers such as Schmit, in keeping with Austin’s theory, it is the shared ‘presumptions’ with respect to ‘conventions’, held by preacher and congregation together in liturgical assembly, that in part create the context for the ‘felicitous’ performance of words.¹⁸⁸ This context of shared understanding enabling words to become performative is also what under-girds Bartow’s understandings of the performative power of his words in the public act of preaching.¹⁸⁹ On this, however, Lamb rightly comments:

Here both Schmit and Bartow assume a high degree of shared assumption on the part of all who are gathered, a strongly covenanted community, with a high level of agreement as to the meanings inherent in the words proclaimed.¹⁹⁰

To put that differently, Schmit and Bartow require this context for their understanding of the performative power of words to work. In contrast, Lamb suggests that this does not accurately describe the diverse reality of the nature of the people who constitute many congregations. Going further than Lamb, it is also a context that does not describe the reality of open-air preaching. Again, therefore, what the preaching as performance writers understand to be preaching as performance is a notion that struggles to sustain itself beyond, in this case, a particular understanding of the nature of the liturgical community gathered in worship.

Further relevant critique of the application of speech act theory is also brought from a theological perspective. Both Lamb and later Rottman argue that an overemphasis on speech act theory with its concern only for the horizontal relationship between

¹⁸⁶ Childers and Schmit, ‘Introduction’, 15.

¹⁸⁷ Schmit, ‘Only Say the Word’, 115-129, *Too Deep*, 43-59.

¹⁸⁸ Schmit, ‘Only Say the Word’, 117-118, *Too Deep*, 47-48; Rottman, ‘Performative Language’, 68-73.

¹⁸⁹ Bartow, *God’s*, 1-2.

¹⁹⁰ Lamb, ‘Getting’, 147.

preacher and congregation ‘leaves little or no room for God in preaching’.¹⁹¹ To emphasise this point Rottman refers to sermons where the appropriate conditions are present but the preaching does not seem to perform and other contexts where they are not and it does.¹⁹² This latter theological commitment to the acting of God in preaching apart from a suitable context is such as expressed in the previously cited quotation from Campbell regarding open-air preaching, that:

No pulpit offers security; no sanctuary provides a “safe place”; no ordination grants the preacher status and authority. Rather, preachers must rely on God’s Word and the human voice alone.¹⁹³

The preaching as performance writers, therefore, at times posit an understanding of preaching that can only perform in the liturgical context which is not the context in which open-air preaching may occur.

In this section, I am not arguing that all of the preaching as performance authors, like Rice, polemically assert that the only authentic preaching is that which occurs in a particular understanding of liturgical assembly. That preaching takes place in this context, however, is the dominant assumption of many if not all of these writers. It is also an assumption about the nature of preaching that becomes inextricably intertwined with some their more developed theories and theologies of preaching as performance. This becomes problematic when alternative contexts and experiences of preaching are proposed as with Lamb and Rottman respectively. The understanding of preaching as performance held by the authors can be so tied to one particular perceived context that it is rendered inadequate in another. For Lamb, while appreciating and building upon the insights of the preaching as performance writers, this leads to her proposing a revised model. It is a model that almost moves away from performance altogether, to a construct that she feels is more suited to her evangelical context.¹⁹⁴ In this thesis, it leads me to proposing radical street performance, as an understanding of performance more suited to open-air preaching,

¹⁹¹ Rottman, ‘Performative language’, 82. See also Lamb, ‘Getting’, 147.

¹⁹² Rottman, ‘Performative Language’, 72-73.

¹⁹³ Campbell, ‘Street’, 104.

¹⁹⁴ Lamb, ‘Getting’, 149-151. She suggests the image of ‘director’ or even ‘ragged, energetic player-coach’ as more suitable image to describe a pastor in an evangelical church rather than ‘skilled and authoritative actor’, although says that both images can learn from one another, 149.

than the understanding of preaching as performance posited by the preaching as performance writers.

2.6.2. A Limited Understanding of Performance

One reason why the concept of preaching as performance as advanced by the preaching as performance writers is inadequate for understanding and analysing open-air preaching is that the authors operate with a limited understanding of preaching in relation to the practice of open-air preaching. Another reason is that they also operate predominantly with a limited understanding of what constitutes artistic performance.

In discussing preaching as performance the authors draw comparisons with performances such as painting, music, dance, film, storytelling, poets, comedians, and theatre. The drama of theatre is certainly a dominant and favoured comparison for some. Childers is among the authors who are explicit about promoting the analogy of preaching and theatre. In her book *Performing the Word*, she has chapters entitled, 'Preaching as Theatre' and 'Worship as Theatre'.¹⁹⁵ As with other writers, she helpfully draws comparison in a number of ways. In her work and that of others who make this comparison, however, there is no indication whatsoever that what is being perceived is anything other than theatre traditionally understood - that is theatre consisting of dramatic actions performed by actors on a stage, in a building, and to an audience who have voluntarily gathered and probably paid to watch. That this is the dominant perception being assumed is understandable. As performance theorist Schechner states, this is 'theatre as we have known and practiced it'.¹⁹⁶ One difficulty, however, is that this only represents one particular understanding of the nature of theatre. In this regard and with respect to theologians who appropriate the theatrical image, Joshua Edelman says that they need to give greater attention to the varied nature and recent developments in the discipline with which they are drawing

¹⁹⁵ Childers, *Performing*, 36-56, 121-145.

¹⁹⁶ Schechner, 'A New Paradigm for Theatre in the Academy', *The Drama Review*, 36:4 (1992), 8.

comparisons.¹⁹⁷ It could be argued that this is not a fair critique to make of the preaching as performance writers because the theatre they describe is most suited to the kind of preaching that they are discussing. The limitations, however, are apparent. A particular understanding of theatre is portrayed as theatre without any discussion of the consequences of this. In the comparison, this particular understanding of theatre mutually reinforces a particular understanding of preaching with neither challenging the fundamental assumptions of the other. With respect to possible analogues for open-air preaching, not only is there little attention given in the literature to alternative forms of theatre but none is given to the wide range of performances with theatrical dimensions that take place outside the context of theatre buildings.¹⁹⁸ Consequently, the understanding of preaching as theatre, as advanced by the preaching as performance writers, is limited in its applicability to open-air preaching which does not take place in the assumed comparable theatrical context.

Following on from the above and in keeping with the comparison made between church and theatre, the performers with whom preachers are frequently associated are actors. Again, Childers is explicit in the comparison with a chapter in her book *Performing the Word* entitled, 'What Actors Know'.¹⁹⁹ The comparison is once more understandable and fruitful because preachers like actors work from a script and depend upon embodied orality for their presentation. It is also recognised by writers who advance the comparison that it can invoke negative suggestions with respect to pretence and falseness.²⁰⁰ Such writers, therefore, rightly draw attention to the concern of actors to provide authentic and truthful performances.²⁰¹ These are valid arguments but again the concepts being applied are limited. With respect to actors they are usually based upon acting theories associated with Constantin Stanislavski (1863-1938).²⁰² Other understandings, however, of the relationship between actors,

¹⁹⁷ Joshua Edelman, 'Can an Act be True? The Possibilities of the Dramatic Metaphor for Theology within a Post-Stanislavskian Theatre', Hart and Guthrie, *Faithful*, 51-72.

¹⁹⁸ Baz Kershaw, *The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard* (London: Routledge, 1999), 59-62.

¹⁹⁹ Childers, 'What Actors Know', *Performing*, 99-117. See also Ward, *Holy*, 22-28.

²⁰⁰ Ward, *Heart*, 76; Childers, *Performing*, 36-38; Stevenson, 'The act', 82.

²⁰¹ Ward, *Heart*, 77; Childers, *Performing*, 51-52; Stevenson, 'The act', 82-83.

²⁰² Childers, *Performing*, 99-120; Stevenson, 'The act', 83.

their persona, and truth, are possible. Most notable are the ideas associated with the politically motivated theories of Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956).²⁰³

As indicated, some authors draw comparison with performers other than actors. Schmit while not rejecting the actor analogue draws comparison with poets and musicians.²⁰⁴ Such comparisons are useful in that they avoid the notion of falseness which may, rightly or wrongly, be associated with acting. These comparisons also make it easier to present performance as an expression of the feelings, convictions, and emotions of the authentic self, rather than those of a played character. Be this as it may, even when alternative performing comparisons are given, there is no indication that anything other than a performance on a stage in a building is conceived. These other comparisons, therefore, as with an actor in a dramatic production, are also theatrically based in the sense of being perceived as taking place in a designated building for performance. Along with the analogue of the actor, therefore, some of the other primary comparisons such as with poets, musicians, and dancers are all limited in the performance type they convey with respect to assumed attendant context and conventions.²⁰⁵ Few writers, even in their varied comparisons, convey any sense of what Peter Brook in *The Empty Space* described as ‘rough theatre’ which is, ‘The theatre that’s not in a theatre, the theatre on carts, on wagons, on trestles, audiences standing, drinking, sitting around tables, audiences joining in, answering back’.²⁰⁶ There is little indication, therefore, in their concepts of performance in relation to location, conventions, or type that the ‘holy’ and the ‘rough’ come together in the incarnational event.²⁰⁷ Consequently, again, while it would be inaccurate to say that the images of the preacher as performer as advanced in the preaching as performance literature have no applicability to open-air

²⁰³ Edelman, ‘Can an Act be True?’, 51-72.

²⁰⁴ Schmit, *Too Deep*, 83-114, ‘What Comes Next?’, 169-190.

²⁰⁵ I will discuss the few and limited references to the more popular forms of performances below.

²⁰⁶ Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: Penguin Books, 1968), 73. Edelman makes a general point in this regard but a reading of Brook’s understanding of ‘Rough Theatre’ suggests that is certainly apposite to the preaching as performance literature, ‘Can an Act be True?’, 52.

²⁰⁷ Max Harris discusses the coming together of ‘holy’ and ‘rough’ in an incarnational understanding of theatre, *Theater and Incarnation* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1990), 95-111.

preaching, the applicability is limited since open-air preaching occurs precisely in the context similar to that which Brooks describes as ‘rough’.

Following immediately on from the above, another way in which the understanding of preaching as performance as advanced in the literature is limited with respect to examining open-air preaching, relates to the concept of art as advanced in these writings. As previously discussed, the emphasis by the writers on preaching as art, relates in part to the skilful creation and careful presentation of language and form, so that a sermon can function as artistic revelation. Corresponding to this, many of the specific examples of art forms which they cite are usually those recognised by tradition and or critical acclaim as being particularly noteworthy. Among those mentioned from literature are Herman Melville (1819-1891),²⁰⁸ Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894),²⁰⁹ and T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)²¹⁰. From drama references are made to William Shakespeare (1564-1616)²¹¹ and Thornton Wilder (1897-1975).²¹² Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750)²¹³ and George Frideric Handel (1685-1759)²¹⁴ are examples drawn from music and Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890) from art.²¹⁵ Virtuoso performers such as these provide familiar examples. The problem, however, is that they concentrate primarily on ‘high’ rather than ‘popular’ art excluding the types of artistic activity that are likely to occur in the streets.²¹⁶ In addition the writers certainly generally emphasise a ‘high brow’ concern with the efficacy of artistic revelation over and against the concept of entertainment.²¹⁷ This is what lies

²⁰⁸ Rice, *Embodied*, 104.

²⁰⁹ Rice, *Embodied*, 104-107.

²¹⁰ Bartow, *God’s*, 63 and 123.

²¹¹ Bartow, *God’s*, 98

²¹² Childers, *Performing*, 140.

²¹³ Bartow, *God’s*, 64-65, Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 182.

²¹⁴ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 183.

²¹⁵ Rice, *Embodied*, 78.

²¹⁶ The language of ‘high’ and ‘popular’ art is problematic not only in post-modern philosophical context but in a context where the commercial demands of theatre in some way necessitate a popular appeal, Kershaw, *Radical*, 41-42. Wesley Monroe Shrum, however, with reference in particular to the Edinburgh Festival argues that such distinctions within a hierarchy of art persist and relate to what is or is not given critical approval, *Fringe and Fortune: The Role of Critics in High and Popular Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996).

²¹⁷ Shrum, *Fringe*, 38-40.

behind the comment by Rice when in discussing cinema as art he writes, ‘There are movies and there are movies...Many films are no more than distracting entertainment, and as many have little purpose beyond the box office’.²¹⁸ An emphasis on efficacy is also the undergirding philosophical basis for Schmit developing liturgical expression as artistic expression.²¹⁹ A number of the primary writers, therefore, are keen to state that in discussing art they are not concerned with mere ‘entertainment’.²²⁰

Some attention is given in the homiletical literature to other more popular expressions of art. Some comparison is made between preaching and Jazz, which moves the emphasis in a slightly more popular direction. The references, however, can be less because of its popular and artistic nature and more on account of its technical improvisational qualities. This technical feature of Jazz is considered useful for illustrating the interpretive activity of the preacher and subsequent ethical behaviour of the congregation.²²¹ The few other comparisons with popular artistic expressions are found primarily, and perhaps significantly, in the more popular homiletical writing of the British writers such as Morris and Day with their reference to stand up comedians.²²² It is also Morris, more than any writer, who albeit briefly, defends the concept of entertainment as part of the preaching performance. He does so with reference to rhetoric, history, and contemporary culture.²²³ These references, however, to more popular performance forms are a minor expression among the preaching as performance writers. In addition, even these work with the assumption of artistic performances that take place in buildings with an audience gathered for the purpose of the event. The conception of art, therefore, that is advanced in the preaching as performance literature has only limited applicability to a form of preaching which through its performance has to gather an audience and gain a hearing in the transient and ‘rough’ context of the streets.

²¹⁸ Rice, *Embodied*, 112. For the emphasis of Ward on efficacy over and against entertainment see, Ward, *Holy*, 28-29.

²¹⁹ Schmit, *Too Deep*, xii.

²²⁰ Ward, *Holy*, 29; Childers, *Performance*, 39; Schmit, *Too Deep*, 29-32.

²²¹ Schmit, ‘What Comes Next?’, 183-185.

²²² Morris, *Raising*, 93-94, Day, ‘Learning from the Experts’, *Preaching*, 65-75.

²²³ Morris, *Raising*, 89-93.

2.7. Conclusions

In this thesis I am exploring open-air preaching in performance terms. A difficulty in such an approach is that the term performance can have pejorative understandings when associated with preaching. Contrary to the negative understandings of the term performance as applied to preaching, however, there is a varied body of homiletical literature in which the writers demonstrate the suitability and potentiality of the concept of performance for understanding preaching. This is literature which I designate as the preaching as performance literature and have reviewed in this chapter. Through this review, I have demonstrated that beyond narrow and pejorative understandings of performance, connections can be established between the practice of preaching and the concept of performance. This can be done in various ways in relation to the social sciences, etymology, history, Scripture, art, and theology. As analysed, therefore, these writers establish the immediate homiletical theoretical context for understanding preaching in performance terms.

As I have argued, however, the understanding of preaching as performance, as demonstrated in this literature, has certain limitations with respect to its applicability to open-air preaching. These limitations are that the preaching as performance writers concentrate on in-church preaching and in-building performances. On the one hand, this would appear to be a consequence of the preaching as performance writers, like many contemporary homiletical writers, working with the unquestioned assumption that preaching is a practice that occurs within the context of a congregation gathered in liturgical assembly. On the other hand, it would also appear to be the result of a methodological approach whereby they draw upon the expansive discipline of performance studies in order to establish a broader understanding of performance in relation to the social sciences, etymology and theology, while still retaining a narrow approach to what constitutes artistic performance. The outcome is that despite the contribution which these writers make to the understanding of preaching as performance, the limitations of their approach make it unclear as to how their understanding would be able to explain adequately some of the particular dynamics of open-air preaching which performs beyond the context and conventions of in-building activity.

The difference of context and location in which open-air preaching, in contrast to in-church preaching, occurs, therefore, suggests that an alternative understanding of preaching as performance is required for analysing open-air preaching than that posited by the preaching as performance writers. Consequently, in the next chapter, I will posit radical street performance, as a particular concept of performance suitable for analysing open-air preaching and informing our understanding of this particular expression of Christian preaching in performance terms.

Chapter 3: Open-Air Preaching as Radical Street Performance

3. 1. Introduction

In this thesis, I am examining open-air preaching as radical street performance. In chapter 1, I discuss the difficulty of such research in relation to its core practice, open-air preaching. In chapter 2, I critically review existing preaching as performance literature. Through this review, I discuss the ways in which the preaching as performance writers, create the theoretical context for understanding preaching as performance. I also indicate the limitations of their understandings of preaching as performance for exploring open-air preaching in performance terms. Consequently, in this chapter I argue that radical street performance is a valuable way of understanding and analysing open-air preaching as performance.

Jan Cohen-Cruz, currently director of ‘Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life’, is a performance theorist, practitioner, and activist.¹ Cohen-Cruz introduces and develops the concept of radical street performance. She uses the term in her international anthology, *Radical Street Performance*, to describe a wide range of public outdoor activities.² These activities include the performances of street singers, theatre companies, protest groups, and the witness of the mothers of the Plaza De Mayo, who highlighted the disappearance of their children during the military dictatorship in Argentina between 1976 and 1983. The understanding of the concept of radical street performance followed in this thesis is drawn from the work of Cohen-Cruz. It is also supplemented by bringing it into conversation with the work of other writers on performance. This includes in particular, the writing of leading British performance theorist Baz Kershaw, who is presently Professor of

¹ ‘Imagining America: Artists and Scholars in Public Life’, <http://www.imaginingamerica.org/>, accessed, 1/7/09.

² *Radical Street Performance: An International Anthology*, ed. by Jan Cohen-Cruz (London: Routledge, 1998). Other works by Cohen-Cruz have a greater emphasis on community based theatre rather than radical street performance. *Playing Boal: Theatre, Therapy, Activism* ed. by Mady Schutzman and Jan Cohen-Cruz (London: Routledge, 1994), Jan Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts: Community Based Performance in the United States* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005).

Performance at the University of Warwick.³ His writing deepens the theoretical understanding of what Cohen-Cruz posits as radical street performance, particularly in relation to in-building performances and the post-modern context.

Political street theatre is a related and perhaps more familiar concept than radical street performance. It is possible to regard the practices as synonymous. This depends, however, on the specific definitions given to 'political' and 'theatre' on the one hand, and 'radical' and 'performance' on the other.⁴ For this work, I prefer the terminology of radical street performance. Political street theatre is language that can be associated with a particular historical period and specific ideological commitments. Accordingly, it is terminology sometimes specifically associated with the dramatic actions of primarily left-wing theatre groups in America and Britain especially in the 1960s, 70s and 80s.⁵ In addition, while accurate or not, the term 'theatre' can convey the notion of only a certain type of performance, for example a performance in which a person acts a fictional part following a predetermined script. These specific associations with the terminology mean that it is not as suitable for describing the broad range of dramatic activities, albeit with some 'theatrical' components, that can be described as performances in general and radical street performances in particular.⁶ For these reasons, in this work I do not treat political street theatre and radical street performance as synonymous. Rather, I regard political street theatre as an important expression but not summation of radical street performance. Accordingly, radical street performance is being posited as the more expansive and inclusive concept.

³ The primary works by Baz Kershaw upon which I draw are *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention* (London: Routledge, 1992), and *The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard* (London: Routledge, 1999). The former book is concerned primarily with socially and politically motivated theatre companies in Britain between 1960 and 1990. The latter book develops understandings of the 'political' in relation to the 'radical' and 'theatre' in relation to 'performance', while trying to negotiate between modern and post-modern influences. His most recent book is *Theatre Ecology: Environments and Performance Events* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

⁴ Without discussing the issues of definition Bradford D. Martin uses the different terms somewhat interchangeably, *The Theatre Is In The Streets: Politics and Performance in Sixties America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004).

⁵ Bim Mason, *Street Theatre: And Other Outdoor Performance* (London: Routledge, 1992), 24.

⁶ Baz Kershaw 'Fighting in the Streets: Dramaturgies of Popular Protest, 1968-1989', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 13:51, (1997), 255-276, for an accessible introduction to these ideas.

3.2. Radical Street Performance

Having introduced the terminology of radical street performance, I now proceed to discuss the concept as advanced by Cohen-Cruz and others, more fully. In so doing, I demonstrate the congruence that exists between this performance form and the practice of open-air preaching. This establishes the theoretical coherence between the two practices. In addition, it highlights some of the specific dynamics of radical street performances that can be used to analyse open-air preaching as radical street performance.

Cohen-Cruz defines radical street performance as follows:

By *radical* I refer to acts that question or re-envision ingrained social arrangements of power. *Street* signals theatrics that take place in public by-ways with minimal constraints on access. *Performance* here indicates expressive behaviour intended for public viewing. It includes but is not limited to theatre, which typically keeps actors and spectators in their respective places through the representational conventions supporting a pre-set script. Radical street performance draws people who comprise a contested reality into what its creators hope will be a changing script.⁷

This definition forms the basis for the following discussion and correlation of radical street performance and open-air preaching. Each of the three aspects ‘radical’, ‘street’, and ‘performance’ are discussed in turn. Although this is necessary for heuristic purposes, it is in the dynamic interplay of the three that the radical street performance event happens.

3.3. The ‘Radical’ in Open-Air Preaching as Performance

The term ‘radical’, as applied by performance theorists such as Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw to street performance, has particular meanings. I will demonstrate that these meanings are also applicable to the practice of open-air preaching. This establishes a correlation between the practices of radical street performances and open-air preaching at the level of the radical.

⁷ Jan Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 1-6, 1.

3.3.1. The Transformational Intent of the 'Radical'

The radical in radical street performance theory refers essentially to its quality of seeking to bring about transformation in the audience and culture in which it performs. Thus, Cohen-Cruz states, 'By *radical* I refer to acts that question or re-envision ingrained social arrangements of power'. Again, 'Radical street performance draws people who comprise a contested reality into what its creators hope will be a changing script'.⁸ Here, radical is posited as a concept concerned with bringing about change in society. In terms of performance, this change is brought about by the impact of the performance upon people by its direct or indirect critique of the status quo.

Kershaw offers a similar understanding of what constitutes the radical with respect to performance. In his earlier work, *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention*, he focuses on radical theatre groups in Britain between the 1960s and 1990s who sought 'to change not just the future action of their audiences, but also the structure of the audience's community and the nature of the audience's culture'.⁹ In his later work, *The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard*, while desiring to sit on the 'cusp' between the modern and post-modern understandings of performance he draws on a quotation from Raymond Williams to assert that radical is a term concerned with 'the need for vigorous and fundamental change'.¹⁰

According to the understandings of the radical as advanced by Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw, therefore, radical street performances are performances that seek to bring about change in audiences and wider cultures. Radical street performers, therefore, operate from their own positions of ideological commitment in relation and in

⁸ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', *Radical*, 1.

⁹ Kershaw, *Politics*, 2.

¹⁰ Raymond Williams, *Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society* (London: Fontana, 1976), 210, cited Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

reaction to the practices and perceived ideologies of the status quo which they are seeking to change.

Kershaw is particularly helpful with respect to the matter of the transformational intent of the radical in performance. He describes radical performances as acts of 'cultural intervention'.¹¹ In this intervention they seek to challenge and change the existing ideologies present in the culture of the particular community or society being addressed.¹² With reference to post-modern critiques this does not necessitate the understanding of a 'singular' all embracing ideology in cultures. Rather, it recognises the possible plurality of competing dominant ideologies. Although competing, however, these different ideologies can be mutually reinforcing creating the 'status quo' of the way things are. In contrast to this status quo, radical performances offer alternative and oppositional ideas, contending for a space in the culture or seeking to change the dominant ideologies that exist. Radical performances, therefore, 'have ideological designs on their audiences'.¹³ This thinking is developed by Kershaw in his later work in two directions. One is with respect to the specific importance of the streets as places of ideological struggle.¹⁴ The other is in terms of appreciating the fluidity and flexibility of the post-modern with respect to ideology without conceding a hard relativism with respect to all social, political, and ethical issues.¹⁵ Through Kershaw, therefore, radical performances even with attention to matters of post-modern critique are advanced as events seeking to bring about ideological change and transformation among audiences and cultures.

Open-air preaching exhibits the radical of radical street performance. As a genre of preaching it is concerned with bringing about change and transformation. In seeking to do this among audiences gathered in public spaces, it is an act of 'cultural intervention'. In this intervention, preachers operate from the position of their own

¹¹ Kershaw, *Politics*, 7.

¹² Kershaw, *Politics*, 18-21.

¹³ Kershaw, *Politics*, 21.

¹⁴ Kershaw, *Radical*, 7.

¹⁵ Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

ideological commitments shaped by the Word, in reaction and response to what they perceive to be the dominant ideologies present in wider society. To borrow from Cohen-Cruz, the particularly apt image, open-air preachers perform a script, seeking to draw others from a contested reality, into that script.

3.3.2. The Utility of the 'Radical'

The radical, as defined by Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw, refers to performances which from positions of ideological commitment, seek to facilitate transformation in and through their performances. In this sense, it is a concept applicable to the practice of open-air preaching. This applicability is strengthened by the utility of the concept of the radical, through the breadth of ideological commitments that the term can encompass.

In performance theory, the radical like the political, can be associated particularly with left-wing ideological commitments. This need not be the case. As advanced by Cohen-Cruz, radical is a concept that is applicable to right-wing as well as to left-wing performances.¹⁶ It can refer to the activities of those in power who wish to preserve that power against challenges, as well as to the activities of those who want to oppose it.¹⁷ The performances are radical, regardless of their specific ideological commitments, in that they are seeking to facilitate some sort of change in the ideological commitments of their intended audiences. Noticeably, in this respect, Cohen-Cruz includes an article on the Nazi Nuremberg Rallies in her anthology.¹⁸ Kershaw concurs in presenting the radical as something that can be applied to activities from a range of ideological positions.¹⁹

¹⁶ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 2.

¹⁷ In correspondence with Cohen-Cruz I confirmed that this was an accurate reading of her work, Jan Cohen-Cruz, e-mail correspondence with author, 28/8/08.

¹⁸ David Welch, 'Triumph of the Will', in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 169-178.

¹⁹ Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

It could be argued that the ideological openness allowed by Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw to the radical is unhelpful. Their approach fails to narrow the meaning sufficiently to a particular type of ideologically committed performance. Despite the openness that both Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw attribute to the term radical, the particular sympathies of both to what can be called ‘oppositional’ activities, contra dominant hegemonic expressions of power, is clear. This is evident both in what they write and in terms of the majority of the examples which they offer.²⁰ While this is the case, however, their conceptual understanding of the radical is open to ideological variety. For Kershaw in particular, the non specific ideological commitment of the radical is particularly apposite in the context of the post-modern critique of the idea of single overarching ideological hegemonies.²¹

Although there is ideological openness to what constitutes the radical, as posited by Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw, the term is still useful. On the one hand, it brings together a range of dramatic actions that share the same common features of transformational goal, the location of the streets, and the dynamics of performance. On the other hand, it distinguishes such street performances from other street performances which have other primary alternative goals such as entertainment and or making money. This is not to say that in the variety of their goals such performances may not yet share common performance features.²²

The ideological breadth attributed to the radical by Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw establishes its utility with respect to the practice of open-air preaching. This is the case both in terms of the external relationship of open-air preaching to other radical street performances and in terms of its own internal variety. With respect to its

²⁰ ‘Oppositional’ is a term that Kershaw uses as one possible description of the radical theatre groups that he considers in his earlier work, *Politics*, 6-8. In his later work, while wanting to leave the concept of the radical open, he uses it particularly to describe activities that in their performance create a greater democratisation of activity, *Radical*, 20. To consider, as he does, that this is a good thing, is a position of ideological commitment and to consider that it is necessary makes it oppositional to the way things are.

²¹ This openness with respect to the meaning of the radical is part of his negotiation between Brecht and Baudrillard in performance theory, Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

²² Mason classifies different street performers on the basis of their motivation while recognising the overlap between categories and types of activity, *Street*, 27-29.

external relationships to other radical street performances, the fact that open-air preaching is religious and specifically Christian in its commitment does not exclude it from this understanding. It is the transformational intent of the practice that establishes it as radical. In terms of its internal nature, as with radical street performances, there is much variety in open-air preaching. This variety can be encompassed within the definition of the radical offered. Cohen-Cruz can posit both the activities of those who opposed 'illegal aliens' and those who supported them, as radical performers.²³ Likewise, the various performances of preachers ranging from those who oppose abortion, to those who oppose nuclear weapons, from those who emphasise social transformation, to those who emphasise personal salvation, can all be classified as radical.²⁴ They all perform against other positions with the intention of facilitating change. The breadth of meaning, therefore, attributed to the radical in performance theory, strengthens its applicability to open-air preaching in its variety and in terms of its relationship to other ideologically committed practices named as radical street performances.

3.3.3. The Transcendent Quality of the 'Radical'

A further point worth discussing with reference to the congruence that exists between open-air preaching and radical street performance relates to the potentially spiritual or transcendent nature of the radical as conceived in this performance theory. The potential for the experience of the transcendent in the radical of radical street performance is hinted at in the anthology offered by Cohen-Cruz. This comes in the article by Marguerite Waller.²⁵ Waller describes the performances and counter performances of the respective groups supporting and opposing the crossing of 'illegal aliens' from Mexico to the United States of America in 1989. In this article, talking about the supporters of Mexican workers, she writes that in the performance

²³ Marguerite Waller, 'From Border Boda or Divorce Fronterizo?', in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 86-89.

²⁴ I place these different expressions of preaching here as contrasts because they are represented somewhat as such in the work of Campbell and thus they serve as illustrative of the point being made, Campbell, 'Street', 95-107. Of course these different expressions need not be contrasts as a person can be both anti-abortion and anti-nuclear weapons, just as personal transformation and social change can be understood to be matters that are inextricably intertwined.

²⁵ Waller, 'Border', 86-89.

of their actions they tapped into the ‘spiritual’ power that such an occasion can provide.²⁶ As narrated, this power, at least in the lives of the performers Comadre Aida Mancillas and Comadre Cindy Zimmerman, created a space in which, ‘something wonderful occurred’.²⁷ This ‘something wonderful’ involved them in overcoming their own fears and participating in actions that however beneficial to others were also existentially freeing to them. The suggestion, therefore, is that through the radical nature of such events, people by their participation in them, can have experiences that transcend the actual activities and their primary intended purposes.

It is Kershaw, rather than Cohen-Cruz, who explicitly uses the language of the ‘transcendent’ in relation to the transformational quality of the radical in radical performances.²⁸ Kershaw means by this that radical performances, particularly those which take place in the streets, in the processes of the performance, have the potential to create a freedom that goes beyond the ideologies being either opposed or advocated. Such a freedom, he claims, can create ‘currently unimaginable forms of association and action’ that can be experienced by both performers and spectators.²⁹ This understanding seems to correlate with the experience of the two Comadres as narrated by Waller. One of the most helpful examples which Kershaw gives of the radical as transcendent relates to the activities of about forty children who were participating in the *Glasgow All Lit Up!* procession directed by John Fox the founder of Welfare State in 1980.³⁰ He claims that as the procession advanced, the group of children started to follow a course of their own making in some sort of shared, leaderless, directionless but not lost, celebratory act of *communitas*.³¹ So read, these children were experiencing and expressing a freedom that transcended the event itself and their allocated part in it. For Kershaw, therefore, the transcendent in the radical relates to the potential in the performance for the radical to ‘reach beyond’

²⁶ Waller, ‘Border’, 87.

²⁷ Waller, ‘Border’, 88.

²⁸ Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

²⁹ Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

³⁰ Kershaw, *Radical*, 74.

³¹ Kershaw, *Radical*, 77.

itself in the experience created for the participants and or spectators in what is being produced.³²

This use of the term transcendent by Kershaw illustrates, with respect to street performances, the point made by Childers concerning the shared theological language artists and preachers can use to explain the nature of their activities.³³ Open-air preaching is certainly concerned with the transcendent. In terms of its content based on the Word, its perceived enabling power from the Holy Spirit, and its transformative intent, open-air preaching constantly reaches beyond itself and its own performance. This is apparent in a variety of the literature of advocacy previously discussed. Accordingly, Spurgeon encouraged his students that, 'The occasion will frequently suggest the fittest thing to say, and we may also fall back on the Holy Spirit who will teach us in the self-same hour what we shall speak'.³⁴ Soper, while resisting exaggerated claims for the efficacy of open-air preaching, speaks of 'golden moments when that for which we most yearn becomes gloriously possible'.³⁵ In turn, Chris Michael an experienced pastor is quoted by Campbell as saying, 'On the street there is always the possibility that the spoken Word will cast out a demon or confront evil in such a way that open spiritual warfare will result'.³⁶

Going beyond the above, a closer association between the transcendent qualities of the radical, as advanced in the concept of radical street performance and the practice of open-air preaching, can be developed. This relates to the liberating existential experience of the preachers as street performers. Here the contribution by Campbell is particularly interesting. He describes the event of a student preaching in the street for the first time.³⁷ Before she begins she is fearful to the point of nausea. In the performance of street preaching, however, she experienced and expressed energy, a passion, and a boldness she had never known before. The student wrote to her

³² Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

³³ Childers, *Performing*, 21-24.

³⁴ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 95.

³⁵ Soper, *Advocacy*, 82.

³⁶ Campbell, 'Street', 106.

³⁷ Campbell, 'Street', 95-96.

boyfriend, 'I preached on the street today. It was exhilarating'.³⁸ Others commented, "'We've never seen that side of you.'" "What happened?"'.³⁹ Campbell states, 'Somehow, the street had freed Melanie to preach in a way she had never before imagined.'⁴⁰ In this account we have a description of a liberating existential experience. This experience relates in several respects closely to the 'spiritual' experience of the Comadre as narrated by Waller and the concept of the transcendent nature of the radical as suggested by Kershaw. In open-air preaching, therefore, as in other radical street performances, the transcendent quality of the event can relate not simply to what is achieved through the event but to the impact of participation in the existential experience of the performer.

Kershaw also uses the language of 'democratisation' to describe the transcendent nature of the radical in street performances.⁴¹ It is a democratisation that is made possible because in the streets performances 'transgress' established theatre and performance conventions in a liberating way.⁴² Again, connections can be established with open-air preaching. As previously noted in chapter 1, open-air preaching has historically been one of the more democratic forms of preaching in terms of those able to participate.⁴³ More, than this, however, by performing in the streets open-air preachers not only preach out-with the regular conventions of building, worship, and congregation, but in a context where the listeners have considerable freedoms to respond, react, and reject. They can show displeasure by walking away.⁴⁴ They can control the nature and content of the performance by welcome or unwelcome interruption and vocal participation.⁴⁵ It is this 'democratic' context, where listeners have considerable freedom that shapes the particular nature of open-air preaching events and plays a part in creating any consequent radical outcomes, either in relation to intended goals or in additional ways.

³⁸ Campbell, 'Street', 95.

³⁹ Campbell, 'Street', 95.

⁴⁰ Campbell, 'Street', 94.

⁴¹ Kershaw, *Radical*, 20.

⁴² Kershaw, *Performance*, 74.

⁴³ Campbell, 'Streets', 105.

⁴⁴ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 89.

⁴⁵ Soper, *Advocacy*, 72-73.

Performance theorists, Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw, develop in their writings the concept of the radical in street performances with respect to transformative, ideologically open, and transcendent connotations. Thus far, in showing the congruence between open-air preaching and radical street performance, I have demonstrated the connections between these ideas of the radical and the practice of open-air preaching. I will now proceed to demonstrate this congruence further by discussing the correlations that exist between the concept of the 'streets' in radical street performance and the practice of open-air preaching.

3.4. The 'Streets' in Open-Air preaching as Radical Street Performance

Another area in which congruence can be demonstrated between radical street performance and open-air preaching, is with respect to the location in which these practices take place. Both take place outdoors, in the streets. The term, the streets, can convey primarily an urban setting. It need not mean this, however. It is a term used colloquially in performance studies to refer to 'public spaces'.⁴⁶

3.4.1. 'Street' Performances and Religious Performance

To posit open-air preaching as radical street performance with reference to its location in the streets is not to place religious performance in an unfamiliar setting. There is a long and varied association between street performances and religious performances.

Cohen-Cruz notes that historically the church from the ancient world, through medieval and modern Europe, has used street performances in order to assert its power and influence.⁴⁷ In this, she refers not least to the use of mystery plays that originally moved from the church to the streets in the twelfth and thirteenth

⁴⁶ Martin, *Theater*, 3.

⁴⁷ Cohen-Cruz, 3-4.

centuries.⁴⁸ Much more, however, on this matter of the relationship between street performance and religious performances can be said. In one direction, an association can be made in the history of street performance with religious rituals in ancient Roman Society.⁴⁹ In another direction, links can be made between the origins of street artists and entertainers and the spiritual figure of the 'shaman' in tribal societies.⁵⁰ The relationship between performance and ritual including religious ritual is a fairly widely discussed issue in performance studies.⁵¹ With respect to specifically Christian associations, it is true that there were times when the Christian Church, aware of the power and critical of the perceived licentiousness associated with theatre and outdoor performances, sought to repress them. On the other hand, however, at times outdoor entertainment was intimately connected with religious fairs and festivals.⁵² In turn, priests and monks could be and or become street entertainers. David Cohen and Ben Greenwood in their book on the history of street entertainment describe the use of puppets by priests in pre-Reformation England 'as a means of educating while entertaining'.⁵³ Going further, they suggest that following the dissolution of the monasteries some monks may have made an alternative livelihood out of their puppets.⁵⁴ Moving in a more contemporary direction, some modern Christian theatre groups, referring back to the mystery plays for justification, have performed and encouraged others to perform in the open-air as a means of communicating their message.⁵⁵

With reference to the broader understanding of performance, as advocated by Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw, and being pursued in this work, there is also a wider range of religiously motivated and or supported street performances that can be mentioned.

⁴⁸ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 4.

⁴⁹ David Cohen and Ben Greenwood, *The Buskers: A History of Street Entertainment* (London: David and Charles, 1981), 11-25.

⁵⁰ Mason, *Street*, 14-15.

⁵¹ Schechner, *Performance Studies*, 52-88.

⁵² Cohen and Greenwood, *Buskers*, for an interesting discussion of St. Bartholomew's fair, 98-130.

⁵³ Cohen and Greenwood, *Buskers*, 101.

⁵⁴ Cohen and Greenwood, *Buskers*, 101.

⁵⁵ Alan MacDonald, Steve Stickley, and Philip Hawthorn, *Street Theatre: Performing Outdoors For Any Occasion* (Eastbourne: Minstrel, 1991).

There are the fascinating connections between the actions of the suffragettes as performing artists and their use of street preaching methods.⁵⁶ There are the religious convictions undergirding many of the activities associated with the Civil Rights movement in America in the 1960s.⁵⁷ Again, with reference to 1960s America, there is the influence of Dorothy Day and the Catholic Workers movement on the street performances of the *Living Theatre*.⁵⁸ With its sources in the churches of Britain, there were the public performances of those engaged in the *Jubilee 2000*, and the debt campaigns.⁵⁹ In addition, there are the ‘single issue’ radical street performances by church groups who protest against a range of moral issues including abortion.⁶⁰ This is to mention but a selection of religiously inspired and supported radical street performances.

Ideologically committed street performances have a long and varied history. Included within that history are religiously and specifically Christian motivated performances. To position open-air preaching, therefore, within the practice of radical performances which take place in the location of the streets is not to place it as a religious practice in completely unfamiliar territory.

⁵⁶ I make these connections by bringing together the contributions on the one hand, of Leslie Hill ‘Suffragettes Invented Performance Art’ in *The Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance* ed. by Lizbeth Goodman with Jane de Gay (London: Routledge, 2000), 150-156, and on the other hand, Jacqueline R. deVries, ‘Transforming the Pulpit: Preaching and Prophecy in the British Women’s Suffrage Movement’, in Kienzle and Walker, *Women Preachers*, 318-333.

⁵⁷ For one discussion on this and its relation to street theatre, Martin, *Theater*, 20-48.

⁵⁸ This connection is one that I picked up through reading Martin, *Theater*, 49-85.

⁵⁹ Bronwyn Maudlin, ‘Jubilee 2000 Northwest: breaking the chains of global debt’, in *From ACT UP to the WTO: Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization*, ed. by Benjamin Shepard and Ronald Hayduk, (London: Verso, 2002), 81-87. In citing the outdoor activities of this campaign as a radical street performance I am anticipating the argument that according to the understanding of Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw such activities can be described as performances. So understood works such as that by Shepard and Hayduk offer alternative and some more recent performances to those given in the works by Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw. Following on from this, sources that narrate events of religious activism can also provide examples of radical performances, see Shelby Briggs, *Brave Hearts Rebel Spirits: A Spiritual Activists Handbook* (Chichester: Roddick Publications, 2003), for a popular introduction.

⁶⁰ Cohen-Cruz discusses such and particularly those who opposed them in an article ‘At Cross-Purposes: The Church Ladies for Choice’, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 90-99.

3.4.2. The 'Streets' as the Gateway to Wider Audiences

Radical street performers see the 'streets' as 'public by-ways with minimal constraints on access'.⁶¹ As a consequence of this they consider that the streets offer them the potential for reaching a broader and more diverse audience than would be found in theatre buildings. Kershaw accordingly describes performances outside of theatre buildings as a 'profoundly public genre'.⁶² By this he means that they are performances that take place in a wider cultural context than that which is established and defined by in-theatre space. The term 'profoundly' indicates a qualitative difference in the public nature of the streets in terms of access and freedom, compared to in-building activities.

The notion that the streets offer performers access to a general public audience is not without problems. Public space is on the decrease. Most space belongs to someone and has greater and lesser degrees of access for certain groups. There is no homogenous mass public to be reached. Street performers may often attract a regular following. Their message may only be heard by the already committed. In addition, the theatre, itself, has a broad range of audiences.⁶³

The above points problematising the notion that the streets offer performers access to a diverse and broad audience have some validity. In response, however, several things can be said. First, by going to where people are gathered for other purposes, street performers have at least the potential of bringing performances to those who may never attend a theatre building. Second and critically, since radical street performances are ideologically committed, one of their purposes is to communicate their message to the uninformed, the uninterested, the unconvinced, and the opposed. In engaging with such groups among the publics, radical street performers play precisely before those who would be least likely voluntarily to attend a theatre or other event sponsoring such a message. The going to the streets, therefore, represents

⁶¹ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 1.

⁶² Kershaw, *Radical*, 7.

⁶³ Some of these issues are raised by Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 2-3.

a determined impulse to reach beyond the ideologically committed. For it is possible that only the committed are the most likely to attend even performances that take place in alternative in-door venues.⁶⁴ Third, the mobility of street performers allows them actively to seek out diverse groups beyond those who would gather in buildings.⁶⁵ Fourth, the media attention created by the interventionist nature of radical street performances may provide an ‘indirect conduit to broad and diverse audiences’.⁶⁶ It may be rhetorical hyperbole to describe the streets as the ‘gateway to the masses’.⁶⁷ The streets, however, do offer radical street performers a space in which they have the potential for variously reaching with their message those who may not voluntarily seek out the communication of that message in other places.

With respect to the streets as a gateway to the masses, as already discussed in relation to understanding open-air preaching as missional, a frequent motivation is the desire to reach a wider audience with the Christian message than can be achieved by in-church preaching. Spurgeon’s explicit statement on this matter has already been noted, *‘The great benefit of open-air preaching is that we get so many new*

⁶⁴ Cohen-Cruz, raises the issue that ‘street’ performances can sometimes describe performances that take place in non-traditional theatre buildings, ‘Introduction’, 2. In turn, Mason claims that, ‘What is important about outdoor theatre is not that it has no roof over it – many of the groups described in this book also perform in such spaces as old churches, warehouses, tents, museums and exhibition halls – but that it is away from the pre-defined structure of a theatre building’, *Street*, 1. That such alternative buildings may attract alternative audiences is not denied although in the case of radical performances the possibility of them only attracting the already committed is very real. Such performances could be described as ‘out-theatre’ performances and may invite comparison with ‘out-church preaching’. My own focus, however, is on performances and accordingly preaching that takes place in outdoor space to which the public have and claim access. Kershaw, argues that the streets understood as the outdoors in contrast to even alternative theatre buildings offers the greatest opportunity of reaching beyond the confines of the institution of theatre, *Radical*, 74.

⁶⁵ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 2.

⁶⁶ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 2. Several of the essays in the anthology demonstrate the way in which radical street performances may have the media as an intended if not primary audience, for example, Suzanne Lacy and Leslie Labowitz, ‘From Feminist Media Strategies For Political Performance’, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 38-41. Alisa Solomon’s article ‘Aids Crusaders Act Up A Storm’ indicates the way in which the group while not uncritical of the media as an institution was yet willing to use it in order to communicate its message, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 42-51. The double-edged nature of media attention, however, is something that is apparent in the essay by Steve Durland, ‘Witness: The Guerrilla Theatre of Greenpeace’, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 67-73, where it is indicated that there can be too great an emphasis by the media on the protest rather than the issue and that success can bring retribution.

⁶⁷ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 2.

comers to hear the gospel who otherwise would never hear it'.⁶⁸ In more poetic prose he writes:

Some of our brethren are prosing on and on, to empty pews and musty hassocks, while they might be conferring lasting benefits upon hundreds by quitting the old walls for awhile, and seeking living stones for Jesus.⁶⁹

For Soper, open-air preaching was about 'getting to the outsider'.⁷⁰ Mike Sprenger, a popular advocate for open-air preaching writes that not only does open-air preaching allow the church to 'reach large numbers of people' but that these people include those 'who have no contact with Christianity or church members'.⁷¹ Similarly, open-air preaching advocate, Ken Gaskell states, 'it gives us the opportunity to bring our message to a wider audience'.⁷² Open-air preachers, therefore, as with radical street performers, view the streets as a gateway to publics beyond those whom their in-building performances have little possibility of reaching.

3.4.3. The 'Streets' as Contested Space

Another point of connection between the practices of open-air preaching and radical street performance relates to the way in which the streets are understood. In both practices, the streets can be understood as contested space.⁷³ Cohen-Cruz, as already noted, writes that the purpose of radical street performances is to draw people 'who comprise a contested reality into what its creators hope will be a changing script'.⁷⁴ The streets are the site of that contested reality. Street performers place themselves physically in the midst of the contest. This can take the form of entertaining and inspiring strikers gathered outside their workplaces, of standing outside of

⁶⁸ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', italics Spurgeon, 78.

⁶⁹ Spurgeon, 'Remarks', 79.

⁷⁰ Frost, *Goodwill*, 106.

⁷¹ Sprenger, *Presenting*, 14.

⁷² Gaskell, *Open-Air Evangelism*, 3.

⁷³ For an introduction to some of the ways in which space as related to specific sites can be contested, *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*, ed. by Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga (Oxford : Blackwell Publishing, 1988), particularly, 245-298.

⁷⁴ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 1.

government buildings, of directly confronting opponents, or of inhabiting the site of perceived offences.⁷⁵

Kershaw indicates that radical performances as acts of social engagement and cultural intervention can take place directly on ‘alien territory’.⁷⁶ An example of this is the anti-war messages that the *Welfare State* political theatre group sought to communicate in the armament dependent town of Barrow-in-Furness in the 1980s.⁷⁷ In his later work, he suggests that the streets in particular are the most likely places to demonstrate changing cultural patterns and colliding paradigms.⁷⁸ A poignant example he gives of this, is the lone man with his shopping bags in hand standing in the way of the progress of the tanks as part of the Tiananmen protests in China in 1989.⁷⁹

Without the use of the specific language, in writing about open-air preaching, Spurgeon demonstrates an awareness of the streets as contested space where some will welcome it and some will not.⁸⁰ More than this, however, he encourages preachers to go specifically to those areas of the city ‘which lie out of the route of decency, and are known to nobody but the police, and to them principally through bruises and wounds’.⁸¹ This is a spiritual battle for ‘Soldiers of Christ’ against the legions of hell.⁸² From an alternative theological reading, Saunders and Campbell also offer a helpful and explicit understanding of open-air preaching as performing in contested space. Accordingly, the streets are posited as the site of conflict between the ‘reign of God’ and the ‘powers and principalities’ of the world.⁸³ In this reading,

⁷⁵ These are some of the activities recorded in the anthology by Cohen-Cruz.

⁷⁶ Kershaw, *Politics*, 7.

⁷⁷ Kershaw, *Politics*, 206-242.

⁷⁸ Kershaw, *Radical*, 7.

⁷⁹ Kershaw, *Radical*, 117-119.

⁸⁰ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 88.

⁸¹ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 87.

⁸² Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 87 and 95.

⁸³ Their reading of what constitutes the principalities and powers referred to in the Scriptures is shaped and influenced by the work of William Stringfellow and Walter Wink whereby such are interpreted in terms of life denying structures and institutions in society.

however, the powers and principalities are understood with reference not to literal supernatural deities but to structures and institutions that are life denying rather than life enhancing.⁸⁴ In their own situation, they relate this particularly to settings where institutions and organisation conspire against the poor and the homeless. For them, open-air preaching is to enter the contest of the streets with an ideology shaped by the Word. It is to preach with ‘resistance’ and ‘hope’ before the powers that will be encountered in the streets.⁸⁵ It is to participate in the “collision” between the gospel and the world’.⁸⁶ A similar although less developed understanding of street preaching is offered by Erdman.⁸⁷ Although capable of various theological understandings, therefore, open-air preaching like radical street performances is a practice that, in entering the public space from a position of ideological commitment, engages in the contested nature of such space.

This theme of open-air preaching and contested space is picked up in the appreciative ‘Foreword’ to the writing of Saunders and Campbell by their colleague, biblical scholar, Walter Brueggemann. He writes, ‘I understand the importance of street preaching to be the urgency of contested reality’.⁸⁸ He admires its ‘*willingness to contest and be contested amidst bodily reality*’.⁸⁹ He suggests that in-church preachers, who may never preach in the open-air, can learn from the disputative and reality informed qualities of street preaching. This would enable ministers and churches to better engage in public theology and to debunk some of the claims of prevailing structures and institutions.⁹⁰ These statements by Brueggemann are valid insofar as they go. To recognise that in-church preaching can learn from open-air preaching is to counter something of its frequent neglect. Brueggemann, in fact, suggests that street preaching may be doing the proper job of church preaching.⁹¹ It is

⁸⁴ Saunders and Campbell, ‘Conversions’, 7.

⁸⁵ Charles L. Campbell, ‘The Streets, the Powers, and the Word: Learning from William Stringfellow’, in Saunders and Campbell, *Word*, 63-85.

⁸⁶ Campbell, ‘Street’, 106.

⁸⁷ Erdman, *Countdown*, 117-124.

⁸⁸ Walter Brueggemann, ‘Foreword’, in Saunders and Campbell, *Word*, x-xvi, xiii.

⁸⁹ Brueggemann, ‘Foreword’, xiii, italics Brueggemann.

⁹⁰ Brueggemann, ‘Foreword’, xiii-xiv

⁹¹ Brueggemann, ‘Foreword’, xiv.

also the case that church services are in some senses public spaces, albeit shaped by explicit and implicit rules and conventions. Be this as it may, what actually gives open-air preaching the qualities Brueggemann admires is the actual physical location in which it occurs. For there in the streets, the contest is a matter of immediate and physical reality rather than simply homiletical theory applied to in-church preaching.

Entering the contest of the streets may demonstrate ‘arrogance’. It involves imposing views upon others and making them unwilling spectators.⁹² It also, however, requires ‘bravery’. This bravery, as helpfully expressed by Cohen-Cruz, involves an altruistic willingness to ‘offer one’s body for some common goal, without the safety of an impermeable frame’.⁹³ Her anthology records something of the legal, the social, the verbal, and the physical risks that radical street performers face. Their actions require nothing less than the embodied performance of physical presence in contested space. The embodying of self in performance, in contested space with the attendant risks, is the nature of radical street performance.

Risk taking embodied presence is also a feature of open-air preaching which occurs in contested public space. Spurgeon records both the verbal and physical hardships and opposition endured by open-air preachers of the past and encourages those to whom he is writing, to be prepared, to face likewise.⁹⁴ Such risks and the willingness to face them, however, are not simply a feature of historical record. Saunders and Campbell state that open-air preaching requires courage, indeed ‘brazenness and audacity’.⁹⁵ Erdman writes, ‘But let us not be naïve. Street preaching is not safe’, it requires ‘people gutsy enough to bleed in the street’.⁹⁶ Shared among such authors, albeit from their different historical settings and theological perspectives, is the conviction that such difficulties in the practice are to be related to identification with the way of Jesus Christ and his crucifixion.⁹⁷ Erdman states the matter as follows:

⁹² Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 3.

⁹³ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 3.

⁹⁴ Spurgeon, ‘Sketch’, 54-75, ‘Remarks’, 87-91.

⁹⁵ Chris Michael an experienced pastor and street preacher cited in Campbell, ‘Street’, 107.

⁹⁶ Erdman, *Countdown*, 120.

⁹⁷ See Spurgeon on Christopher Hodge and his sufferings, ‘Remarks’, 88 and Campbell, ‘Street’, 107.

Preaching in the streets, we and our people will learn the cruciform way of Jesus in the world. We will follow Jesus, 'the faithful witness' (Revelation 1:5), or more literally translated, 'faithful *martyr*,' in the world, for the love of the world and for the saving of the world – and that will mean from time to time being pitched into the teeth of rejection, hatred, violence and death itself for the sake of the Word's mission in the world.⁹⁸

In this respect of being embodied performance, in the contested reality of the streets, the practice of open-air preachers is closer to the practice of other radical street performers than it is to in-church preaching.

Radical street performers and open-air preachers share a common stage: the streets. That those with religious convictions, in addition to other ideologically committed persons and groups, may take to the streets is not new. The streets for both offer at least the potential for gaining an audience broader than that which is likely to gather in buildings, theatre, and church respectively. To go to the streets, however, is to enter the ideological and physical vulnerability of contested space. In language borrowed from a performance theorist, this involves the offering up of one's body for the cause.⁹⁹ Here the incarnational language associated with the preaching as performance literature and applied to in-church preaching takes on the fuller meaning of incarnation in the world and not simply in the context of building, congregation, and worship. Both radical street performers and open-air preachers are radical. They are similarly concerned with the expression of that radicality in the streets as places of ideological contest. In addition, as I will go on to discuss, both practices also converge in their nature as performances.

3.5. The 'Performance' in Open-Air Preaching as Radical Street Performance

The preaching as performance literature reviewed in chapter 2, demonstrates the suitability and the applicability of the concept of performance for understanding preaching. On the one hand, it does so by drawing on broader understandings of the

⁹⁸ Erdman, *Countdown*, 120, italics, Erdman.

⁹⁹ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 3.

nature of performance than the purely theatrical. On the other hand, it demonstrates something of the artistic nature of preaching. The problem for the application of such understandings to open-air preaching is that in the move from the broader understandings of performance to the narrower artistic understandings, the writers concentrate on theatrical performances that take place in buildings. As a consequence of this the dynamics of performances that take place out-with buildings are rendered opaque. Radical street performance theorists, however, offer an understanding of performance that brings together the broader understandings of performance and its theatrical and artistic nature, in a way that is particularly suited to considering open-air preaching in performance terms. In this section, therefore, I will demonstrate the congruence that exists between the understanding of performance as advanced by the radical street performance writers and the practice of open-air preaching.

3.5.1. 'Performance' as Dramatic, Expressive, Public Behaviour

Cohen-Cruz defines performance as 'expressive public behaviour intended for public viewing'.¹⁰⁰ This is an understanding that resonates with the expansive understanding of performance as advanced in the developing discipline of performance studies and introduced in chapter 1, where performance at its broadest, signifies 'showing doing' and can embrace all of life.¹⁰¹ The definition by Cohen-Cruz, therefore, indicates the influence of this broad understanding of performance, yet includes the qualifiers of 'expressive' and 'intentional'. This shows a desire to avoid what Kershaw calls the 'theoretical abyss' created by the fact that if everything is a performance then nothing really is performance.¹⁰² Avoiding the abyss is a matter of negotiating between the '*limitations*' of theatre traditionally and institutionally understood and the '*limitlessness*' of performance as referring to all human activity.¹⁰³ Kershaw, therefore, defines performance as 'cultural presentations that have recognisable theatrical components'. What he means by 'recognisable theatrical components' is

¹⁰⁰ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 1.

¹⁰¹ Schechner, *Performance*, 28.

¹⁰² Kershaw, *Radical*, 15.

¹⁰³ Kershaw, *Radical*, 15.

that the activity ‘frames’ in some way its nature as an expressive and ‘constructed’ public event.¹⁰⁴ For Kershaw this is a definition that can include much of what goes on in theatre and beyond but not everything.

For both Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw performance is a concept not limited to the description of plays enacted by actors on artificially constructed stages in buildings. It can equally and perhaps better describe a wide gamut of purposeful, expressive, human behaviours that through the nature of their dramatic actions draw attention to themselves and thus to their ideological commitments. Thus in terms of street events it can be used to describe political protests, processions, the silent holding up of pictures by the mothers of the disappeared, the theatrical activities of ACT UP and Welfare State, the entertaining and inspiring of strikers through political songs, and so on.

Bradford D. Martin in his work, *The Theater in the Street*, refers to the definition of performance by Erving Goffman that it is ‘all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way the other participants’.¹⁰⁵ While this definition on its own is in danger of reverting to a possible description of all human activity, it is yet useful. It is a reminder of the transformational intent that is a feature of the performances being discussed in this work as radical street performance.

Open-air preaching is expressive and purposeful behaviour. It is performed in order to gain attention. It has particular features of action and content that mark and frame it as preaching. The purpose of its behaviour is to influence others in the direction of change. Such preaching is dramatic, expressive, purposeful, open-air public performance.

¹⁰⁴ Kershaw, *Radical*, 15.

¹⁰⁵ Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1959), 15-16, cited Martin, *Theater*, 3.

3.5.2. 'Performance' as the Convergence of Art, Ideology, and Everyday Life¹⁰⁶

The concept of performance in radical street performance has breadth. It can include within its field of reference a wide variety of dramatic human actions with 'theatrical' characteristics. In addition to this, it is an understanding that embraces in the nature of what constitutes performance, the convergence of art, ideology, and everyday life. That is, in radical street performances there is a collapsing of traditional theatre distinctions such as between art and ideological activism, performer and spectator, and the staged life and real life. This is what is signalled in the reference by Cohen-Cruz that radical street performance moves beyond traditional theatre practices which 'keep actors and spectators in their respective places through presentational conventions supporting a pre-set script'.¹⁰⁷ It is also the understanding that undergirds the work of Kershaw in his desire to focus on performance rather than theatre.

The breaking down of traditional distinctions between art, ideology, and everyday life is apparent in much of the political street theatre of the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s. The influences encouraging such convergence included earlier theatrical forms, politicised theatre theory, the avant garde in art, the strongly politicised nature of 1960s culture, Civil Rights, anti-War, and CND protests, and quite simply the desire of performers to take their message to the streets. Whatever the particular influence on particular performers the convergence of art, activism, and life became a regular feature of what can be described as radical performances. In turn, this invited the consideration of a broader range of events where art, ideology, and everyday life met, as performance events outside of theatre.¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁶ I adapt this title from Martin who entitles his introduction 'The Convergence of Art, Politics and Everyday Life', *Theater*, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 1.

¹⁰⁸ Generalisations about the specific influences on any particular performance are difficult. For some discussion on the issues, Mason, *Street*, 9-25; Richard Schechner, 'The Five Avant Gardes Or...Or None?', in *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader* ed. by Michael Huxley and Noel Witts, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 1996), 342-358; Kershaw, *Radical*, 89-125; Martin, *Theater*, 3-19.

In the anthology offered by Cohen-Cruz, there are two particularly helpful reports. They illustrate the collapse of traditional distinctions and the convergence of art, ideology, and everyday life in the performance of radical street performances. The first is a journalistic report from Dan Sullivan relating to street theatre in East Harlem.¹⁰⁹ In this report he highlights two notable characteristics of the event. The first is that the plays were staged on the streets of East Harlem, among the people of East Harlem, by people from East Harlem, and were about life in East Harlem. Here life on stage and life in reality blurred into one. Secondly, he notes that the audience ‘milled around the stage, jumped up on it, yelled at the actors, never stopped moving or talking’.¹¹⁰ This audience activity, however, was not a rejection of the performance but a revelling and participation in it. In turn, the performers worked such participation into their activities. Here the divisions between performers and spectators were broken down in the performance as part of the performance.

The second report of specific interest with respect to the convergence of art, ideology, and everyday life in the concept of radical street performance, relates more specifically to the activity of the performers, in particular to the ‘paradox’ of playing a theatricalised role while doing nothing other than expressing one’s own deepest convictions. This report is by Alisa Solomon and focuses on the theatrical activities of the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) group in the late 1980s.¹¹¹ A group who ‘through innovative use of civil-rights-era non-violent civil disobedience, guerrilla theatre, sophisticated media work, and direct action...helped transform the world of activism.’¹¹² As Solomon expresses it, the ‘paradox’ comes as people are invited to engage in staged and choreographed behaviour to express their values and views. This can lead them to feel as though they are simply taking part in role play. She reports one person as saying to her:

¹⁰⁹ Dan Sullivan, ‘Theatre in East Harlem: The Outdoor Audience Gets into the Act’, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 100-102.

¹¹⁰ Sullivan, ‘Theatre’, 100.

¹¹¹ Alisa Solomon, ‘Aids Crusaders Act Up a Storm’, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 42-51.

¹¹² Benjamin Shephard and Ronald Hayduk, ‘Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization’, in Shephard and Hayduk, *From Act Up to the WTO*, 1-9, 1.

I know how I'm supposed to look, what I'm supposed to wear – jeans and an ACT UP T-shirt – and how to do the chants and shake my fists, but it took me a long time until I felt that it was really *me* doing these things.¹¹³

This understanding or perhaps rather lack of it, Solomon attributes to the fact that this person and others were new to activism. In contrast she argues that for people, especially those who are gay, to speak up in a homophobic culture is a political act. The staged events provide them with an opportunity to express real and deep and personal emotions and anger. When this is the case, to overcome fear and shout and holler and clench fists is 'no acting'.¹¹⁴ In such performances, therefore, the intentional theatrical behaviour, ideological activism, and real life convictions of the performers can become one.

A particular dimension of performances that collapse traditional theatrical distinctions is an implicit and or explicit critique of traditional in-theatre performances. This critique is also implied in the previously cited statement by Cohen-Cruz that traditional theatre practices 'keep actors and spectators in their respective places through presentational conventions supporting a pre-set script'.¹¹⁵ It is a critique made explicit, however, in the first article in the anthology. There, Peter Handke, writing in the 1960s article 'Theatre-in-the-Street and Theater-in-Theaters' expresses a particularly polarised view. He argues that since the theatre is itself a social institution, it cannot be used to change and challenge social institutions. Rather, real committed theatre takes place in the streets. He writes, 'Slogan chanting which aims to be effective in the theatre and not in the streets is modish and kitsch'.¹¹⁶ As Handke indicates, in radical performances there was an impulse for some political performers to radicalise not simply the message communicated or the nature of the on-stage performances but the total theatrical event itself as something complicit in the systems being challenged.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ Solomon, 'Aids', 47

¹¹⁴ Solomon, 'Aids', 47.

¹¹⁵ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 1.

¹¹⁶ Peter Handke, 'Theater-in-the-Streets and Theater-in-Theaters', trans Nicholas Hern, in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 7-10.

¹¹⁷ Also on this Kershaw, *Politics*, 146.

Kershaw discusses some of the left-wing ideologies that undergirded the critique of theatre as an institution by political theatre groups. This includes the notion that it was a means used by the middle-classes to maintain power.¹¹⁸ While resisting the applicability of such interpretations to theatre in the contemporary context, he offers his own critique of institutional theatre. In this he posits theatre as a commodity whose conventions reinforce the values of consumer capitalism.¹¹⁹ As such, this creates the paradox that to stage a play in a theatre building attacking the values of capitalism is in fact to be participating in the very thing that is being attacked.¹²⁰ In contrast to this, he argues that performances which take place outwith theatre buildings and so transgress the attendant conventions have the potential for an ‘excess’ in performance that can lead to the radical breaking out.¹²¹ What Kershaw’s argument has in common with the earlier more explicitly political ideologies, is that preference for performances beyond theatre buildings contains a critique of established theatre practices with respect to their ability to bring about change in a system of which they are a part.

The understanding of performance involving the convergence of art, ideology, and real life can be directly related to the practice of open-air preaching in a number of ways. First, open-air preaching is a performance in the sense of ‘expressive’ and ‘intentional’, ‘showing doing’. In the performance the preacher plays the role of preacher. They utilise certain skills and behaviours associated with the art of preaching. In this performance, however, the ideas and emotions being expressed are ‘no acting’. The person and the persona converge. Second, open-air preaching is about preaching in the midst of the reality of peoples’ lives. It occurs in the midst of every day life.¹²² Third, the event of preaching can be an event of ideological activism. To preach in the open-air can be an enacted refusal to allow the Word to be silenced in public spaces. It can be to assert the right to free speech. In addition, to preach in particular sites of contest, such as outside a nuclear weapons base in

¹¹⁸ Kershaw, *Radical*, 49.

¹¹⁹ Kershaw, *Radical*, 49-54.

¹²⁰ Kershaw, *Radical*, 54.

¹²¹ Kershaw, *Radical*, 57-86.

¹²² Campbell, ‘Streets’, 99.

opposition to nuclear weapons, freights the act itself with specific political significance.¹²³ Fourth, in open-air preaching, as in radical street performances, the interaction with and the reaction of the audience are critical features of the performance. Different open-air preachers will handle this in different ways but handle it they must. Soper considered such interaction including genuine heckling to be essential to the ‘dynamism’ of his speaking.¹²⁴ Fifth, the practice of open-air preaching has often signalled an implicit or explicit critique of in-church preaching and the Church as an institution. As a consequence of this it has often been associated with periods of reform and renewal in the life of the church.¹²⁵ Open-air preaching, therefore, like radical street performance, is a practice in which art, activism, and the realities of everyday life variously converge.

3.5.3. ‘Performance’ as Creating an Audience and Negotiating a Hearing

A further point of connection between radical street performances and open-air preaching, relates to way in which they seek to bring about the radical through their activities. For if they wish to facilitate change, open-air preachers like radical street performers, require to create an audience and ‘negotiate a hearing’ for their ideologically committed convictions through their performances.¹²⁶

Cohen-Cruz writes of radical street performances that, ‘Rallies, puppet shows, marches, vigils, choruses and clown shows are just some of the forms used to capture both media and popular attention in a plethora of different contexts.’¹²⁷ The intention

¹²³ Mernie King, ‘Like Street Preaching in Downtown Rome: Witnessing at Nuclear Weapons Facilities’, in *Waging Peace: A Handbook for the Struggle to Abolish Nuclear Weapons*, ed. by Jim Wallis (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982), 206-212.

¹²⁴ Frost, *Goodwill*, 106.

¹²⁵ Campbell, ‘Street’, 100-101.

¹²⁶ The term ‘negotiate a hearing’ is one which I borrow from McLure, *Four*, 12, although his concern is with preaching in the context of a congregation and my concern is with how an ‘ideological transaction’ is facilitated with an audience created in the streets. I considered whether the phrase ‘haggling for a hearing’ might be more appropriate to capture the nature of an open-air negotiation but felt that this may carry negative connotations.

¹²⁷ Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 3.

of such performances is to reach beyond the already committed. To do so, the attention of potential audiences needs to be gained. The dramatic actions adopted for this purpose, however, as indicated by Cohen-Cruz, have to be activities suited to the particular context of the streets, such as rallies, marches, and vigils. Likewise, the artistic behaviours enacted, need to be dramatic and appropriate for street performance. Thus in addition to the puppets, music, and clowning that Cohen-Cruz mentions, street performers will use other traditional forms of circus and popular entertainment including, juggling, acrobatics, comedy, and escapology as suitable forms for the streets.¹²⁸ More generally, in her analysis of radical street performances, Cohen-Cruz offers five broad categories of street performance forms: agit-prop, witness, integration, utopia, and tradition.¹²⁹ Again significantly, we can note the use of 'witness', language familiar from theology, to express the nature of radical street performance events.¹³⁰ In terms of how each of these approaches identified by Cohen-Cruz functions in creating an audience and negotiating a hearing, it can be said that they confront, show, involve, inspire, and invite, respectively.¹³¹ The particular strategies street performers adopt in forming audiences and communicating with them, will depend upon various factors such as the specific context, the amount of support they have, the message being communicated, and the resources available. What is required in each case, however, is that the approaches adopted are suitable for the streets both in their ability to be performed in that particular context and in their capacity to create an audience in such a way that a message can be communicated.

Kershaw highlights the radical performance forms of carnival and agit-prop, and suggests that a number of political alternative theatre groups used a hybrid form of

¹²⁸ See David Cohen and Ben Greenwood, *The Buskers* (Surrey: David and Charles, 1981) and Bim Mason, *Street Theatre: And Other Outdoor Performance* (London: Routledge, 1992) for the range of popular performance forms used in street entertainment and performances.

¹²⁹ Cohen-Cruz gives an initial description of these different forms in the 'Introduction' to her work, 4-5. She also divides her work according to these forms and offers a further explanation at the beginning of each section. Clearly these forms overlap and any one performance can be analysed in various ways.

¹³⁰ The indebtedness that the use of the concept witness has to Quaker practice is acknowledged, Durland, 'Witness', 29.

¹³¹ This is my reading of her categories in terms of their gathering and communicating functions based upon what she writes about these categories in the introduction and throughout the anthology.

celebratory agit-prop.¹³² This hybrid approach, he argues, was a response to the necessity that ideologically committed performers have, to gather an audience and engage in an ideological negotiation with them.¹³³ As a consequence, such groups:

aimed to combine entertainment with - well, if not instruction (*pace* Brecht) then debate, discussion, socio-political proposals and recommendations... The companies making this theatre aimed to combine art and action, aesthetics and pragmatics.¹³⁴

In part, in radical performances entertainment is necessary to gain interest and gather an audience. In part, it is necessary to break away from the idea that ideological performances are humourless.¹³⁵ Form and content meet when the form stages something of the sense of the message being conveyed. This is the case, for example, when carnival and the celebratory are used to convey something of the utopian ideas being communicated.¹³⁶ In this understanding, entertainment and achieving efficacy, through influencing change, are not viewed as binary opposites, as is implied in some of the preaching as performance writings. They are rather, considered different parts of the same continuum.¹³⁷

The task which ideologically committed performers face in creating an audience and negotiating a hearing can be discussed at another level still. The goal of ideologically committed performers is to facilitate an 'ideological transaction' between them and their audiences in the direction of change.¹³⁸ For this to occur, however, performers require in various ways to connect with the ideas, values, and traditions, of their audiences.¹³⁹ The challenge for the radical performers is to do this without becoming fully incorporated into the ideologies and values which they seek to change.¹⁴⁰ Or to put that slightly differently, ideologically committed performers have to navigate the

¹³² Kershaw, *Politics*, 67-92.

¹³³ Kershaw, *Politics*, 18.

¹³⁴ Kershaw, *Politics*, 5.

¹³⁵ Kershaw, *Politics*, 77

¹³⁶ Cohen-Cruz, 'Utopia: Introduction', in Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 167-168, 167.

¹³⁷ Schechner discusses this understanding that entertainment and efficacy are not opposites, *Performance Studies*, 79-80.

¹³⁸ Kershaw, *Politics*, 16.

¹³⁹ Kershaw, *Politics*, 21.

¹⁴⁰ Kershaw, *Politics*, 8.

paradox of being both popular and radical.¹⁴¹ If they cannot navigate this, on the one hand, they may have no audience or on the other hand, they may fail to communicate their own convictions. Radical street performers, therefore, have to draw on strategies related to form and content that will allow them in public spaces, to gather an audience and negotiate a hearing, in the direction of ideological change.

Open-air preachers like radical street performers are diverse in their variety. In preaching in the streets, however, they cannot avoid the issues of creating audiences and negotiating ideological transactions with the audiences they create. Be this as it may, this is something that Saunders and Campbell, from their post-liberal understanding of the nature of the Word preached, do not actually discuss in their writing of the performance of open-air preaching. This is also something, the preaching as performance writers, with their emphasis on in-church preaching also ignore. In contrast to this, the example and writings of some notable open-air preachers demonstrate the ways in which they recognised and responded to these issues.

George Whitefield exploited theatrics to the full as a strategy for open-air preaching.¹⁴² This allowed him to compete for the attention of people not in churches but in public spaces, to compete not with other preachers but with market traders, to compete not for people's sacred time but for people's leisure time. In so doing, like radical street performers, he combined 'edification' with 'entertainment'.¹⁴³ As he 'huckled' for an audience the use of his body was a key visual component in his performances.

The words were a scaffold over which the body climbed, stomped, cavorted, and kneeled, all in an attempt – as much intuitive as contrived – to startle and completely overtake his listeners.¹⁴⁴

The style and the open-air stage demanded an extempore approach but his was yet a prepared performance. Stout writes:

¹⁴¹ Kershaw, *Politics*, 8.

¹⁴² Stout, *Divine*, 68.

¹⁴³ Stout, *Divine*, xvi.

¹⁴⁴ Stout, *Divine*, 40.

There could be no document standing between his body and his audience. Like an actor memorizing his script, he had to internalize his text and articulate his message with apparent spontaneity and effortless improvisation.¹⁴⁵

Whitefield, therefore, was not simply a ‘dramatist’ but an open-air dramatist who used suitable open-air strategies in order to gain an audience with the purpose of communicating a Christian message aimed at nothing less than their conversion.

In contrast to Whitefield, Spurgeon in his remarks on open-air preaching shows a resistance to overly dramatic actions which he typifies as:

the wild-raving-maniac action which some are so fond of, which seems to be a cross between Whitefield with both his arms in the air, and Saint George with both his feet violently engaged in trampling on the dragon.¹⁴⁶

He states rather, that the actions of a preacher should be ‘purely natural and unconstrained’.¹⁴⁷ This notwithstanding, Spurgeon writes explicitly aware that, ‘it must be viewed as an essential part of a sermon that somebody should hear it’. He continues, ‘it cannot be a great benefit to the world to have sermons preached *in vacuo*’.¹⁴⁸ As a consequence of this and despite his convictions concerning the work of God in preaching, Spurgeon gives considerable practical advice on how people should preach in the specific context of the open-air. This advice ranges from matters of choosing the location, to the volume of voice, to the content of the message, to the structure of sermons, to the length of sentences, to the use of wit.¹⁴⁹ All of this advice is geared towards gaining an audience and gaining a hearing in a way appropriate for the context of the streets, which is a different context from that of a congregation gathered in worship.¹⁵⁰

A further notable open-air preacher, whose example and advice demonstrates the awareness that open-air preaching is different from in-church preaching, and requires adopting strategies suitable for creating an audience and gaining a hearing in the

¹⁴⁵ Stout, *Divine*, 43.

¹⁴⁶ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 91-92.

¹⁴⁷ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 91.

¹⁴⁸ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 89.

¹⁴⁹ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 82-95.

¹⁵⁰ Spurgeon, ‘Remarks’, 89.

open-air, is Soper. Soper is clear that the ‘technique’ and ‘format’ of open-air preaching ‘are contained within a secular environment rather than a spiritual one’.¹⁵¹ As a consequence of this, it is ‘*sui generis*’ and the failure of many people is to think that it is the same as preaching in the church, whereas nothing can be further from the truth.¹⁵² As to the techniques required, Soper draws attention to proper volume of voice, how to speak to a moving crowd, and the readiness to be led by the interest and interactions of the audience.¹⁵³ Since the preacher has to be ready to be led by the audience, he suggests that preachers need to have a working knowledge in the areas of the church, politics, and science.¹⁵⁴ He says that there is a virtual guarantee in the open-air that a preacher will never be speaking on abstruse matters, except to themselves, because the crowd will have left.¹⁵⁵ Again, unlike in-church preachers who have the luxury of being hesitant about the concept of entertainment Soper states that, ‘Anyone who seeks to offer Christ in the open air must be prepared to be as patient and, if you like, as entertaining as he can be’.¹⁵⁶ Preaching in the open-air can get ugly.¹⁵⁷ Yet, Soper argues, interestingly in a way similar to the concept of the transcendent previously discussed, that preaching in the open-air can be a particularly freeing and joyous experience where outwith the constraints of the church the preacher can let their ‘hair down’.¹⁵⁸ Soper, therefore, like Whitefield, and Spurgeon, in similar and dissimilar ways, demonstrates open-air preaching as a practice that has to adopt specific styles and techniques relevant to the open-air context if an audience is to be created and ideological transactions negotiated.

Radical street performers, in order to create an audience and negotiate a hearing from them, use strategies and techniques suitable for doing so in the streets. Open-air preachers are required to do likewise giving attention to similar considerations and

¹⁵¹ Soper, *Advocacy*, 65.

¹⁵² Soper, *Advocacy*, 77.

¹⁵³ Soper, *Advocacy*, 77-78.

¹⁵⁴ Soper, *Advocacy*, 72-77.

¹⁵⁵ Soper, *Advocacy*, 72.

¹⁵⁶ Soper, *Advocacy*, 70.

¹⁵⁷ Soper, *Advocacy*, 71.

¹⁵⁸ Soper, *Advocacy*, 71.

approaches. They share this same performance necessity if their purpose of the radical is to be achieved in the location of contested public space.

The performance in radical street performance is a concept of dramatic action that brings together art, ideological commitment, and everyday life, for the purposes of creating an audience in order to engage in ideological transaction in the direction of change. Since this transaction has to be negotiated with audiences who do not share the same ideological commitments as the performers, the performers need to express themselves using the techniques of drama and art in order to create such an audience and obtain this hearing. Ideologically committed open-air preachers, seeking to bring their convictions into the contest of the various ideologies of a culture, face exactly the same challenges. The ideologies may be different but the performances as to their essential nature as dramatic action involving a convergence of art, ideology, and life for the purposes of facilitating change, are the same.

In this chapter, therefore, with reference to a number of the significant advocates and practitioners of open-air preaching, past and present, and in relation to the writing of leading performance theorists, I have argued that there are areas of congruence between the practice of open-air preaching and acts and activities which have been described as radical street performances. More than this, these connections exist at each of the key points of the dynamics of the concept of radical street performance: the ideologically committed ‘radical’ nature of the activity, the contested space of the ‘streets’ as the locus for enactment, and the necessity to use intentional and expressive ‘performances’, in order to create an audience and negotiate a hearing. It is on the basis of this demonstrated congruence that I posit the concept of radical street performance, as described and formulated above, as a constructive and illuminating way for understanding and analysing the practice of open-air preaching. Furthermore, I advance it as an approach that moves beyond the limited understanding of preaching as performance as found in the preaching as performance literature and discussed in chapter 2.

3.6. Critique and Response

To posit radical street performance as a suitable concept for analysing open-air preaching, raises a number of issues by way of possible critique, that require clarification. One issue relates to the nature of radical street performances and the nature of open-air preaching. Sue Fox from the group Welfare State writes, 'A good street theatre piece will be primarily visual, not verbal.'¹⁵⁹ In contrast, it can be argued, open-air preaching is primarily an oral/aural event. Consequently, it can be considered that the radical street performance approach, has only limited applicability to the practice of open-air preaching. One response is that Fox is writing about only a particular type of street performance and that the genre as demonstrated is much more varied in its nature. Be this as it may, it has to be conceded that she raises the valid issue of the importance of the visual nature of street performances. It is also certainly the case that analysing open-air preaching from the perspective of radical street performance involves exploring the total enacted event rather than only or even primarily its verbal dimensions. This may be considered a weakness. On the other hand, this more comprehensive approach to analysis can be defended. One of the contributions which the preaching as performance writers have made to homiletics is to highlight the embodied nature of preaching and its visual as well as oral/aural qualities.¹⁶⁰ Live preaching does not consist in a disembodied voice but in an embodied voice physically enacting the drama of a performance in a particular context. Radical street performance, therefore, is a suitable approach for analysing open-air preaching in that it takes a number of the dynamics of the event and not simply the oral/aural dimensions into consideration without neglecting the latter.

In addition to the above, an analytical approach that concentrates solely on the oral/aural aspects of open-air preaching will, at least in some cases, have a limited historical applicability. Sometimes all that remains of historical examples of open-air preaching are trace reports and recollections of what was actually said. This is the case with the open-air preaching of George MacLeod discussed in chapter 6. Even,

¹⁵⁹ Sue Fox, 'Street and Outdoor Performance and Music', *Engineers of the Imagination: The Welfare State Handbook* ed. by Tony Coult and Baz Kershaw, rev. edn (London: Methuen, 1990), 31-57, 32.

¹⁶⁰ Ward, *Heart*, 46.

however, where sermon scripts and transcripts exist, they can fail to convey any sense of what made the preacher impressive. This is a difficulty, for example, with the sermon scripts associated with Whitefield and Wesley.¹⁶¹ As Davies expresses it, interestingly using theatrical language, ‘the *mise-en-scène* is missing’.¹⁶² To be sure, a performance approach will be hindered in the analysis that can be offered by a lack of ‘sermon’ materials. With reference, however, to the totality of the preaching event, including the persona of the preacher, what they looked like, the location in which they preached, the nature of their audiences, and the recollected impression on listeners, some analysis of the preaching as performance can still be offered even where sermon material is limited. Arguably, therefore, this makes radical street performance a particularly suitable approach for understanding and analysing open-air preaching, particularly when access to the verbal dimensions is limited, rather than as is suggested in the critique, less so.

A second issue, critiquing the suitability of the approach, can be the claim that ideas of political theatre and activism are somewhat passé, particularly in a post-modern socio-political context. In response to this objection several things can again be said. First, the concept of radical street performance, as described and discussed in conversation with Cohen-Cruz and Kershaw, is precisely not limited to traditionally conceived, political, and theatrical activities. Rather, it includes a wide range of outdoor ideologically committed acts and actions with theatrical dimensions, albeit still including more traditional expressions. Second, while perhaps not well known, there is a range of contemporary social activists and artists who still intentionally combine art and activism in a number of creative ways, including through politically motivated open-air acts of cultural intervention.¹⁶³ Third, since this thesis is concerned with exploring open-air preaching as radical street performance, it is at least interesting to note that one of the most currently successful and internationally known ideologically committed performing artists is Bill Talen. This is interesting

¹⁶¹ Davies, *Worship*, vol. 3, 150.

¹⁶² Davies, *Worship*, vol. 3, 150, italics Davies. ‘*Mise-en-scène*’ is a theatrical term that refers to the totality of what is being staged in all its dimensions.

¹⁶³ www.thevacuumcleaner.co.uk, accessed, 23/5/09; www.labofii.net, accessed, 23/5/09. One of the specific groups about whom information can be found on these sites and who gained prominence during G8 protests in Scotland in 2005 was the ‘Insurgent Rebel Clown Army’.

because Talen's performing persona is a street preacher/television evangelist known as the 'Rev. Billy'.¹⁶⁴ Talen has exploited the 'rituals' associated with church services and preaching to the full in his political, often open-air dramas, creating what can be described as a 'politurgy' against consumerism.¹⁶⁵ Despite being his performing persona, the Rev. Billy expresses Talen's genuine ideological concerns. In turn, for some, the Rev. Billy and what he represents, have taken on genuine 'spiritual' significance.¹⁶⁶ Radical street performance, therefore, rather than being passé continues to be a varied and developing albeit minority performance expression.

A different question, in relation to positing open-air preaching as radical street performance, is the nature of the relationship between radical street performance and 'community theatre' and the significance of this for preaching. This question is raised because a number of ideologically committed performers have moved into this area.¹⁶⁷ The question is not straightforward to address because what is meant by 'community theatre' varies. Cohen-Cruz, for example, prefers the phrase 'community-based performance' in order to avoid the notion of a local amateur theatre group.¹⁶⁸ At least as explicated by Cohen-Cruz, what lies at the heart of community-based performances, is that in a local area people, place and performance come together, with change being brought through participation in performances

¹⁶⁴ 'Reverend Billy: The Church of Life After Shopping', www.revbilly.com, accessed 2/7/09, which includes information on a recent 'tour' in England during May and June, 09. There is a considerable amount of information on Talen including academic research regarding his activities. A useful introduction is Bill Talen, *What Should I Do If Reverend Billy is in My Store* (New York: The New Press, 2003). One piece of academic research that focuses on Talen and his activities is, R. M. Reynolds, 'Moving Targets: Political Theatre in a Post-Political Age', (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, 2006).

¹⁶⁵ Reverend Billy, *What Would Jesus Buy: Fabulous Prayers in the Face of the Shopocalypse* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006). It appears to me that Talen's use and parody of worship and preaching makes 'politurgy' a particularly appropriate word to describe his activities. I first came across this word 'politurgy' used with respect to Talen in a blog entry from Sam Schwartz, at www.good.is/post/the-mob/, accessed 16/1/08.

¹⁶⁶ For a discussion on this, Jill Lane, 'The Reverend Billy: Preaching, Protest and Post-Industrial Flânerie', *The Drama Review*, 46:1, (2002), 60-84.

¹⁶⁷ Mason, *Street*, 24-25.

¹⁶⁸ Cohen-Cruz, *Local Acts*, 7.

rather than through observing them.¹⁶⁹ There are areas of overlap between radical street performances and community-based theatre events. Some community-based performance events can be radical street performances.¹⁷⁰ Likewise, as previously discussed, people can be changed through their participation in radical street performances. This said community-based performances and radical street performances are different genres with a different focus on how and where change can be achieved. In this respect, the clearest parallels between community-based performances and preaching would appear to lie in the area of in-church preaching among a gathered congregation. The connections, however, are not precise in that the sort of participation that community-based theatre postulates appears to go far beyond anything expressed in the homiletical literature, apart from the most post-modern and participatory models as suggested by John S. McClure in *Other-Wise Preaching*.¹⁷¹ In specific reference to open-air preaching, community-based performances raise the question of how open-air preaching as a performance relates to the wider and local church communities. This is a matter that will be discussed in the case studies. This notwithstanding, my focus in this research is on open-air preaching as radical street performance. Radical street performance is an approach which has a more ambiguous relationship with the communities among which it occurs than community-based performances which can have a danger of simply reinforcing the status quo, although this need not be the case.¹⁷²

A final issue regarding the relationship between open-air preaching and radical street performance relates to whether I am claiming that open-air preaching ‘is’ a radical street performance or is being explored ‘as’ radical street performance. Writing about the concept of performance in general, Schechner argues that anything can be studied ‘as’ a performance but that whether or not something ‘is’ a performance, depends

¹⁶⁹ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 5-6. For a brief introduction to recent developments in community-based theatre, Jan Cohen-Cruz, ‘Motion of the Ocean: The Shifting Face of U.S. Theater for Social Change since the 1960’s’, *Theater*, 31:3 (2001), 95-107.

¹⁷⁰ Sullivan, ‘*Theater in East Harlem*’, 100-102.

¹⁷¹ John S. McClure, *Other-Wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001). Rather than there being existing direct correlations I suggest, therefore, that to establish links between community-based performances and in-church preaching is an area for future research.

¹⁷² Cohen-Cruz, ‘Motion of the Ocean’, 101.

upon whether it is deemed as such according to wider cultural values.¹⁷³ This being the case, whether or not open-air preaching is regarded as being a radical street performance, will depend upon how convincing previous and subsequent arguments prove to be in the mind of the reader. This dilemma between the ‘is’ and ‘as’ of performance, however, is not unique to this research but inherent in the nature of the concept. Consequently, while I would advocate that the congruence is such that open-air preaching ‘is’ a radical street performance, I simply here put forward the case that on the basis of the congruence demonstrated between open-air preaching and radical street performance, it is a suitable, constructive, and illuminating way for understanding and analysing open-air preaching.

3.7. Methodology

In chapters 4, 5, and 6, I test the assertion argued in this chapter that radical street performance is a suitable concept for analysing open-air preaching in a way that can inform our understanding of this expression of Christian preaching. I do this by exploring three case studies of open-air preaching according to this approach. These are the open-air preaching of James Haldane, George MacLeod, and OAC GB. This demonstrates the suitability and versatility of the analytical approach while accentuating the particular features of each example explored.

In each chapter, I introduce the open-air preachers and identify the nature and extent of their missional open-air preaching in relation to their wider activities. In turn, I analyse their open-air preaching with reference to the ‘radical’, the ‘streets’, and ‘performance’ as understood in radical street performance. In terms of the ‘radical’, I consider the transformative purposes of the open-air preaching, the success of the preachers in achieving them, and the ways in which the results of the preaching transcended the radical intent of the preachers. With reference to the ‘streets’, I give attention to the significance and drama of preaching in the open-air, the specific locations used, and the ways in which the preaching can be understood as engaging

¹⁷³ Schechner. *Performance*, 38-39.

in ideological contest. In relation to ‘performance’, I discuss in particular, the significance of the performing personas of the preachers, their particular open-air preaching skills, and any theatrics which accompanied their open-air presentations. The analysis in each area is undergirded by the understanding that like radical street performers, open-air preachers require to create an audience and negotiate a hearing for their ideologically committed message. Each case study is also analysed with reference to its nature as radical street performance within its own socio-religious context, a factor not overlooked when conclusions are drawn in the final chapter.¹⁷⁴

In organising the information for analysis in the case studies, I made use of the ‘Dramatistic Pentad’ associated with Kenneth Burke and as explicated by performance theorists Ronald J. Pelias and Tracy Stephenson Shaffer in their work *Performance Studies: The Interpretation of Aesthetic Texts*.¹⁷⁵ The Dramatistic Pentad is an analytical tool which operates at the level of organising and generating information suitable for its evaluative interpretation as performance. While designed primarily for aesthetic texts used in performances, it is an approach that can be used for actual performances themselves.¹⁷⁶ The Dramatistic Pentad consists of a series of questions related to the performance dimensions of: ‘Agent’, ‘Purpose’, ‘Scene’, ‘Act’, and ‘Agency’.¹⁷⁷ These questions are: ‘Who?’, ‘Why?’, ‘Where? When? To Whom?’, ‘What?’ and ‘How?’, respectively. In order to bring nuance and precision, these questions are then broken down into a subset of more detailed questions relating to the particular performance event being explored.¹⁷⁸ This being the case and drawing on and adapting the questions suggested by Pelias and Schaffer, I

¹⁷⁴ The primary and secondary sources associated with each case study indicate the socio-religious contexts in which the preaching took place, as often it was in reaction and response to them. Beyond this, for a general understanding of the socio-religious culture of Britain and Scotland, I follow the work of Callum G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland Since 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation, 1800-2000* (London: Routledge, 2001), *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Edinburgh: Pearson, 2006).

¹⁷⁵ Ronald J. Pelias and Tracy Stephenson Shaffer, *Performance Studies: The Interpretation of Aesthetic Texts*, 2nd edn (Dubuque: Kendall Hunt, 2007), 61-75. This is a later and revised edition of a work cited by a number of the preaching as performance writers.

¹⁷⁶ Pelias and Stephenson, *Performance*, 155.

¹⁷⁷ Pelias and Stephenson, *Performance*, 62.

¹⁷⁸ Pelias and Stephenson, *Performance*, 64.

formulated the questions indicated in Appendix 1, as pertinent to open-air preaching.¹⁷⁹ Not all of these questions proved equally suitable in relation to the actual source material available for each case study. It is also the case that the Pentad can be used with in-church preaching. In this research, however, the information gathered was analysed with reference to the concept of radical street performance in relation to open-air preaching, as described and discussed in this chapter.

With respect to ethical considerations, chapters 5 and 6 in particular, involved correspondence with, interviewing, and observation of live human subjects. In accordance with the School of Divinity's 'Research, Ethics, Policy and Procedure', I carried out a Level 1 ethical self assessment.¹⁸⁰ Through this, I identified no risks other than those that could be handled adequately by the normal tenets of ethical academic research and or following the stated procedures regarding Data Protection and Consent. Throughout, I made the purposes of my research known to those I contacted for information. Where references are attributed to named individuals, I have their permission to do so. On other occasions anonymity is preserved. With respect to observing OAC GB, I first of all gained the permission of the 'gatekeepers' to the organisation at a Scottish and British level.¹⁸¹ In turn, I also obtained the written consent of the OAC GB preachers observed for the use and storage of specified information for the purposes of this research thesis. These observations were also carried out in such as way to minimise any disruption to the activities of the OAC GB preachers, as will be explained further in chapter 6.

¹⁷⁹ For the specific questions suggested by Pelias and Shaffer, *Performance*, 62-63.

¹⁸⁰ 'Research, Ethics, Policy and Procedure', http://www.div.ed.ac.uk/ethics_procedures.html, dated July 07.

¹⁸¹ Alan Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 518-9.

CHAPTER 4: James Haldane's Open-Air Preaching as Radical Street Performance

Its novelty, hazard and daring made it very attractive to multitudes. That a man would brave the changeable Scottish weather, use the vast spaces as a temple and a dull or shining sky as a sounding board and stand up at almost any hour of the day or night to preach was magnetic and appealing.¹

4.1. Introduction

In chapters 1-3 of this thesis, I have introduced and discussed the core practice of open-air preaching, considered the concept of preaching as performance, and argued that radical street performance is a valuable way of understanding and analysing open-air preaching. In this chapter, I now apply the concept of radical street performance to an analysis of the open-air preaching of James Haldane (1768-1851). I have chosen Haldane because his preaching offers a largely unexamined, successful, historical, Scottish example of open-air preaching. This will demonstrate the applicability of the approach. In addition, Haldane's open-air preaching was evangelistic with a concern for personal salvation. As such, it represents a common historical form of the genre. This allows me to demonstrate a more complex performance dynamics involved in such preaching than either supporters or opponents of open-air preaching may sometimes allow.

The way in which I proceed in this chapter is as follows. First, I identify a number of important sources for James Haldane's open-air preaching. Second, I introduce James Haldane's open-air preaching practice. Third, I explore his preaching in terms of the three main areas discussed in chapter 3 of the 'radical', 'the streets', and 'performance'. This allows a direct demonstration of the application of the methodology which I have argued for and will also use in chapters 5 and 6.

¹ D. E. Wallace on James Haldane, 'The Life and Work of James Alexander Haldane' (unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University, 1955), 308.

4.2. Sources

There are a number of primary sources for information about James Haldane's open-air preaching. Chronologically, the first of these is the periodical the *Missionary Magazine*. This publication began in 1796. It was the 'northern counterpart' to the *Evangelical Magazine*, first published in London in 1793.² It played an important role in disseminating information about mission activity at home and abroad. It intimated and recorded, albeit in fairly scant detail, Haldane's missionary tours. It also contained considerable discussion and debate on issues that were raised with respect to the type of itinerant open-air preaching that Haldane engaged in and promoted. The first editor of the *Missionary Magazine* was Greville Ewing. Ewing was minister at Lady Glenorchy's Chapel in Edinburgh until December 1798 when he resigned that post to join with James and his brother Robert (1764-1842) in their missionary plans and projects. Following an acrimonious division with the Haldanes in 1808, he would become known as the father of Scottish Congregationalism.³

A second source for Haldane's open-air preaching is the *Journal of a Tour Through the Northern Counties of Scotland and the Orkney Isles, in Autumn 1779:*

*Undertaken with a view to Promote the Knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*⁴

This *Journal* records details of the first preaching tour that James Haldane undertook with John Aikman and Joseph Rate.⁵ It was prepared and edited by James Haldane.⁶ It gives details of dates, crowd sizes, and Scriptures used during the preaching tour.

² Deryck Lovegrove, "'A set of men whose proceedings threaten no small disorder': The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, 1798-1808", *The Scottish Historical Review*, 79:1 (2000), 61-81, 67-68. I will now refer to the *Missionary Magazine* as *MM* in footnotes.

³ Robert Kinniburgh, *Fathers of Independency in Scotland* (Edinburgh: A. Fullarton & Co, 1851), 246-265, for a biographical sketch.

⁴ J. Haldane, *Journal of a Tour Through the Northern Counties of Scotland and the Orkney Isles, in Autumn 1779: Undertaken with a view to Promote the Knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ*, 3rd edn (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1798). This later edition gives additional information not found in the earlier editions.

⁵ John Aikman was a student of Divinity in Edinburgh who abandoned his studies to go on the tour and Joseph Rate was a preacher from the training Academy of Dr David Bogue, established in Gosport in 1780, to train ministers for Independent churches.

⁶ Alexander Haldane, *The Lives of Robert Haldane of Airthrey, and of his brother, James Alexander Haldane*, 4th edn (Edinburgh: W.P. Kennedy, 1855=1852), 179.

One limitation of the *Journal*, for my research, is that there are few detailed descriptions of Haldane's preaching. One of the values is that the introduction and conclusion indicate the kind of criticisms that Haldane faced for his preaching and the responses he made.

A third and particularly important source for James Haldane's open-air preaching is a biography of the *Lives* of James Haldane and his brother Robert.⁷ This was written by Alexander Haldane, James Haldane's son, a Barrister-at-Law in London. Clearly Alexander wishes to present his family in the best light. It was written in part to correct the perceived neglect and corresponding ignorance of the significant contribution that his father and uncle had made to the extension of the gospel in Scotland.⁸ This bias acknowledged, it is yet an important source. It draws upon, with some demonstrated care, some of the earlier mentioned sources. It was first published in 1852, only a year after James Haldane's death, when some who could confirm or contradict the claims made were still living.⁹ It also contains important excerpts from personal papers, memoirs, and copies of letters, relating to James Haldane and his open-air preaching, that otherwise are no longer extant.¹⁰

In addition to the above, other useful sources include a sermon preached by Ewing in December 1797 and later published in 1799, in defence of itinerant open-air

⁷ Alexander Haldane, *The Lives of Robert Haldane of Airthrey, and of his brother, James Alexander Haldane*, 4th edn (Edinburgh: W.P. Kennedy, 1855). I have preferred this 4th edition because it includes 'some new testimonies to the extent and the results of Mr. James Haldane's itinerating labours in Scotland' than were in earlier editions, 'Preface to the Fourth Edition', vi.

⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, iii.

⁹ That this was the case is demonstrated by the response of John Brown, *Remarks on Certain Statements by Alexander Haldane, Esq., of the Inner Temple Barrister-at-Law in his "Memoirs of Robert Haldane of Airthrey, and His Brother Robert, James A. Haldane"* (Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Sons, 1852). This 'pamphlet' of sixteen pages was a response to the first edition of the biography and later editions are modified presumably in the light of some of the comments made. Rev. Dr John Brown was a minister in the United Secession Church. His complaint is with respect to the way a dispute between him and Robert Haldane over the payment of an 'annuity tax' was represented. In other respects he praises the biography, memory, and contribution of the Haldane brothers to Scotland, including the preaching of 'Captain' James Haldane, 3-4.

¹⁰ I cite the material from *Lives* when I am not aware of it existing in other extant sources.

preaching.¹¹ This gives a detailed insight into the biblical and practical reasons given for the open-air preaching that Haldane, Ewing, and others took part in and promoted. On the other hand, there is the information contained in the ‘Declaratory Act’ and subsequent ‘Pastoral Admonition’, from the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May 1799, which states clearly the reasons why some were opposed to such preaching.¹² The biography, *The Life, Times and Missionary Enterprises of the Rev. John Campbell*, by Robert Philip, published in 1841, is also of some value.¹³ John Campbell accompanied Haldane on a number of tours and this biography contains some references to Haldane.¹⁴ While Campbell is favourable towards Haldane, his biographer Philip is not, on account of the division that would occur between the Haldane brothers and other Independents in 1808.¹⁵ Alexander Haldane while aware of the work by Philip also cites apparently independent references to Campbell.¹⁶

Later relevant secondary works tend to focus on the joint contribution of James and his brother Robert with reference to their contributions to Congregational and Baptist history.¹⁷ They often draw heavily upon the previously mentioned sources. They

¹¹ Greville Ewing, *A Defence of Itinerant and Field Preaching: A Sermon Preached Before The Society for Gratis Sabbath Schools on the 24th December 1797 in Lady Glenorchy’s Chapel, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1799).

¹² ‘Declaratory Act of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, respecting Unqualified Ministers and Preachers’, May 28, 1799, *Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1638-1842* (Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Printing and Publishing House, 1843), 868-869, ‘Pastoral Admonition, addressed by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, met at Edinburgh, May 23, 1799, to all the People under their Charge’, *Acts*, 870-873.

¹³ Robert Philip, *The Life, Times and Missionary Enterprises of the Rev. John Campbell* (London: John Snow, 1841).

¹⁴ John Campbell was founder of the Edinburgh Tract Society in 1793, a promoter of the establishment of Sabbath schools, and a correspondent with the Rev John Newton. He would later become a London minister and overseas missionary. Kinniburgh, *Fathers*, 229-245 for biographical sketch.

¹⁵ Philip, *Campbell*, 142.

¹⁶ Haldane, *Lives*, 117. Interestingly, the article by Lovegrove, ‘A set’ indicated the existence of two extant manuscripts relating to John Campbell’s tour with James Haldane in 1805, 71, footnote 33. These manuscripts were located at the Gleneagles Estate. My own research including contact with Lovegrove, contact with the Haldane family, and a physical search at Gleneagles in April 2007 suggests that they may now have been lost.

¹⁷ *History of the Baptists in Scotland: from Pre-Reformation Times*, ed. by George Yuille (Glasgow: Baptist Union Publications Committee, 1926); Harry Escott, *A History of Scottish Congregationalism* (Glasgow: The Congregational Union of Scotland, 1960); *The Baptists in Scotland: A History*, ed. by

refer to but do not develop discussion on James Haldane's open-air preaching in any homiletical detail. It appears that the most recent extensive work that focuses on James Haldane in particular and in depth is over fifty years old. It is a 1955 unpublished PhD dissertation by D. E. Wallace entitled 'The Life and Work of James Alexander Haldane'.¹⁸ This concentrates on the 'man who, above all others, led the way in establishing evangelism as a legitimate and necessary means of propagating the Gospel in Scotland'.¹⁹ It is a generally positive though occasionally critical account. Some valuable interpretation is given of Haldane's open-air preaching in terms of the part it played in promoting evangelism. It is not, however, analysed or developed as I am doing, in terms of radical street performance.

4.3. The Significance of James Haldane and his brother Robert

James Haldane along with his older brother Robert, were key figures in a movement of evangelical revival in Scottish Church life at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries. This Scottish awakening had its roots in the Evangelical Revival associated with John Wesley and George Whitefield which had been underway in England and Wales since the 1740s. In relation to this awakening the Haldanes are recognised particularly for their shared but different roles in the development of Scottish Independency.²⁰ Their various activities contributed directly to the establishment of Scottish Congregational churches and a stream of Scottish Baptist churches.²¹ To these traditions the Haldanes were the 'Wesley and Whitefield

D. W. Bebbington (Glasgow: The Baptist Union of Scotland, 1988); Brian Talbot, *The Search for a Common Identity: The Origins of the Baptist Union of Scotland 1800-1870*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought, vol. 9 (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003); and the various works of William D. McNaughton on *Early Congregational Independency* published between 2003-2007 and included in bibliography.

¹⁸ D. E. Wallace on James Haldane, 'The Life and Work of James Alexander Haldane' (unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University, 1955).

¹⁹ Wallace, *James*, viii.

²⁰ Callum Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland Since 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), 30.

²¹ Talbot, *Search*, 73-114, for a recent and scholarly introduction to the Haldanes.

of Scotland'.²² They were important figures who have not received their due from ecclesiastical historians.²³ To be sure, the long term numerical outcome of their work, with respect to Congregational and Baptist churches, was relatively small.²⁴ The immediate impact of their activities, however, was considerable. Sunday Schools were established, crowds gathered, opposition provoked, individual lives transformed, and a spirit of evangelical revival was spread beyond the Independent congregations which resulted from their activities. In terms of the wider influence of the movement John MacKay in his Chalmers Lectures on *The Church in the Highlands* claims:

That the Church of Scotland shared in the awakening was made manifest by the increasing number of evangelical ministers who occupied its pulpits, and the growing number of earnest and devout men and women who sat in its pews.²⁵

This evangelical influence may have ultimately contributed to the Disruption in 1843.²⁶ This notwithstanding, the movement challenged and changed the status quo of Scottish religious culture. Thus, Deryk Lovegrove writes:

No longer would defenders of the establishment be able to maintain the fiction of a unitary society in which Church and State functioned, even notionally, as a seamless entity. From this point onwards, the Church irrespective of denomination, would behave increasingly as a gathered society, and would see itself in consequence as operating in a market place of beliefs and values in which its own role was properly construed as one of mission.²⁷

The Haldanes, therefore, were central figures in an important movement of evangelical activity in Scotland at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries.

²² For this from a Baptist perspective, P. Waugh, 'The Converging Streams 1800-50', in Yuille, *History*, 51-65, 55, and from a Congregational perspective, Escott, *History*, 45.

²³ Escott, *History*, 45.

²⁴ Brown, *Religion*, 30.

²⁵ John MacKay, *The Church in the Highlands* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914), 230.

²⁶ W. Landels, 'In the Days of the Haldanes', *Religious Life in Scotland: From the Reformation to the Present Day* (Edinburgh: T. Nelson and Sons, 1888), 135-185, 184.

²⁷ Lovegrove, 'A set', 81.

4.4. Background and Evangelical Conversion

Robert and James Haldane were men of privilege. They were born into a prestigious land owning family, educated at Edinburgh High School, had careers in the Royal and Merchant navies respectively, and participated in University life. In 1783 Robert and in 1794 James ‘retired’ from their careers. For both, however, 1794 marked a decisive turning point in their lives. Already members of the Established Church of Scotland they separately experienced an all-encompassing evangelical conversion.²⁸ Men of economic independence, their interests and energies were now given a new focus. This is expressed by their biographer in biblical language and imagery when he writes:

No longer engrossed with the passing vanities of this transitory world, its pleasures, its gains, or its absorbing glories, all their energies had become concentrated on a new and absorbing object. Each of them, by the rich mercy of God, had now passed ‘from death unto life,’ and from the bondage of Satan into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. Each was in Him ‘a new creature.’ ‘Old things had passed away.’ The strength of their natural character was now to be developed in relation to nobler and more enduring ends.²⁹

For Robert these ‘nobler ends’ would mean financing seminaries and churches. For James it would involve Christian ministry including open-air preaching.

4.5. James Haldane the Preacher

Of the two brothers it was James who emerged as a preacher of note. This prominence was due in part to the fact that that he was ordained on the 3rd of February 1799 as pastor of the Circus, later Tabernacle Church, in Edinburgh. This post he occupied for fifty-two years. In it, he achieved a reputation as an ‘eminent pastor’ and a ‘most outstanding preacher’.³⁰ His preaching attracted large numbers, particularly in the early years, when people hung upon his words.³¹ The Tabernacle

²⁸ Escott, *History*, 52.

²⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 89.

³⁰ Wallace *James*, 277.

³¹ Rev. Christopher Anderson, founder of Charlotte Baptist Chapel, recollection cited Haldane, *Lives*, 225.

building, opened in 1801, was capable of holding three thousand two hundred people. For some years after it opened it was regularly crowded in all its parts.³² Conversions and renewed faith were common features of those times.³³ Haldane's preaching was praised for being methodical, scriptural, and full of pathos.³⁴ Even when his experiments with various matters of ecclesiological order began to create dissensions within the Tabernacle congregation, it remained crowded and the largest church in Edinburgh.³⁵ The adoption by Haldane of Baptist principles with respect to believers' Baptism in 1808 did, however, impact the size of the congregation and 'excepting the evening services, probably reduced it to one-third of its former average number'.³⁶ Such comparisons are relative. Haldane's own papers indicate that in 1809 not only were 'numbers' still attending but that they had 'received more converts from "the world" than for four years previously'.³⁷ It was still the case that even after all had left, Haldane still preached to a large congregation.³⁸ This reputation as a 'successful preacher' was one which remained, at least in Edinburgh, till the end of his life.³⁹

4.6. James Haldane the Open-Air Preacher

Despite his years as pastor at the Tabernacle, it appears James Haldane's reputation as a preacher was founded upon and in part sustained by his activities as an open-air preacher. His demonstrated proficiency in such was one of the reasons he was invited to become pastor of the Tabernacle.⁴⁰ Even after many years of in-church ministry this activity remained important in the minds of his supporters. At the Jubilee

³² Kinniburgh, *Fathers*, 463.

³³ Anderson, recollection cited Haldane, *Lives*, 225.

³⁴ H. Anderson, *The Life and Letters of Christopher Anderson* (Edinburgh: William P. Kennedy, 1854), 14.

³⁵ Wallace, *James*, 253.

³⁶ Haldane, *Lives*, 352.

³⁷ James Haldane cited Haldane, *Lives*, 474.

³⁸ Wallace, *James*, 275.

³⁹ Edinburgh 'Witness' [n.d.] cited Haldane *Lives*, 649

⁴⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 217.

celebrations of his ordination to the Tabernacle on the 12th April 1849, a number present reminisced that the first time they heard James preach was at itinerant and open-air locations. These included Shetland and the Orkney Islands, Calton Hill in Edinburgh, the links at St Andrews, and a graveyard in Kelso.⁴¹ After fifty years of in-church ministry, therefore, James was clearly remembered with respect to his open-air preaching. This was the case even although his most active period of open-air preaching was at the beginning of his Christian service. It was also despite the fact that he had ceased preaching in the open air some twenty years before these celebrations took place. Such is indicative of the extent to which Haldane was known and remembered, first and foremost, at least among colleagues and supporters, as a successful open-air preacher.

4.6.1. The Frequency and Extent of his Open-Air Preaching

James Haldane's first public sermon was at Gilmerton in Edinburgh on the 6th of May 1797 in a school house.⁴² The first indication that he preached outdoors was just over a month later on the 13th July 1797, on the second day of his first preaching tour in the village of Keltiebridge.⁴³ Between 1797 and 1805 he undertook nine such extensive itinerant preaching tours lasting between three or four months.⁴⁴ These involved regularly and primarily preaching in the open air. The first four of these tours between 1797 and 1800 took more than twelve months of activity during which he 'preached at least a thousand times'.⁴⁵ In a ten day period, during his visit to the

⁴¹ Haldane, *Lives*, 632.

⁴² Campbell, cited, Philip, *Campbell*, 131-132 and Haldane, *Lives*, 139-141.

⁴³ Haldane, *Journal*, 37. Keltie Bridge as it is now known, is near Callander.

⁴⁴ Haldane, *Lives*, 325. While Alexander does not at this point list the tours, from his narrative the longer preaching tours undertaken by James can be identified as: the Northern Counties of Scotland and the Orkneys (1797) where he was accompanied by John Aikman and Joseph Rate, the West and South of Scotland (1798) where he was accompanied by John Aikman, a second tour of the Northern Counties of Scotland (1799) accompanied by John Aikman and Dr. Innes, Arran and Kintyre (1800) accompanied by John Campbell, Dumfries and Ireland (1801), Derbyshire and Cheshire (1802), a third tour of the Northern Counties of Scotland and the Orkneys (1803) accompanied by John Campbell, Buxton, Dublin, London (1804), Northern Counties of Scotland (1805) accompanied by John Campbell. These tours were normally conducted in the summer months. When not accompanied by colleagues he was accompanied by members of his family.

⁴⁵ Haldane, *Lives*, 270.

Orkney Isles in 1797, he frequently preached four times a day.⁴⁶ In addition to the longer tours there were also a number of shorter preaching tours in the period 1797-1805 and beyond.⁴⁷ His appointment to the Tabernacle, at least at first, did not diminish his open-air preaching activities. In accepting the position he expressed the desire that it should not hinder his labours in ‘the highways and hedges’.⁴⁸ If not touring, when resident at Edinburgh, he would frequently preach outdoors at various locations. His biographer writes:

After his ordination, the mission ‘to the highways and hedges,’ as he called it, was not abandoned; and on the Calton Hill of Edinburgh, or beneath an overshadowing rock in the King’s Park, or on the links of Bruntsfield, Newhaven, Leith, Portobello, or Musselburgh, his voice was heard by thousands, interested, solemnized, or awed by his direct and earnest appeal to the heart and conscience.⁴⁹

The last time he preached in the open air was in Ayrshire in the summer of 1829. He had passed his sixtieth birthday. He stopped because of the physical strain it was putting on his voice.⁵⁰ His biographer, emphasising the geographical scope of his open-air preaching, claims that as a result of the frequency and extent of Haldane’s open-air preaching it would be ‘difficult to name any town or important village in Scotland’ where at one time or another he had not issued the gospel invitation.⁵¹ For James Haldane, therefore, open-air preaching was a persistent feature of his Christian service for some 32 years.

4.6.2. The Particular Significance of the Early Years

My research indicates that not all of James Haldane’s open-air preaching during his ministry had the same significance. The first twelve years, 1797-1808 inclusive, were

⁴⁶ ‘The Origin of Congregationalism in Scotland’, *The Evangelical Repository*, 3: 10 (1884), 73-83, 81.

⁴⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 325.

⁴⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, 242.

⁴⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 270.

⁵⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 553.

⁵¹ Haldane, *Lives*, 273. This claim is made saying that it would be impossible to give all the details of the shorter tours that he made.

the years of ‘prodigious exertions’.⁵² It was this preaching, which according to the evangelical discourse of the time, was part of the ‘aggressive movement’ of the gospel in Scotland against the ‘darkness’ in church and nation.⁵³ Haldane’s biographer describes the early years, therefore, as a period of ‘moral grandeur’, of ‘excitement and astonishing success’.⁵⁴ His description of this period borders on the hagiographic as he writes of Haldane’s ‘halo derived from the admiration of listening thousands, and the gratitude of almost daily converts’.⁵⁵ Rhetorical exuberance aside, his biographer rightly indicates that Haldane’s ministry had two periods of ‘usefulness’.⁵⁶ The first included the early years of his open-air preaching up till 1808 and the second a ‘quieter and more self-denying’ period of attending to the demands of the pastorate.⁵⁷

With respect to the first period, Haldane’s open-air preaching of 1797 to 1805 had particular importance. These were the years when his preaching and the responses to it stimulated a wider movement of evangelical activity and awakening with the consequence that after 1805, Haldane no longer felt it necessary to make any more prolonged preaching tours.⁵⁸ In the years up till then, however, his open-air preaching was central to all that was going on in the development of evangelical Independency. This is indicated in the ‘Evangelical Repository’ account of September 1884:

Of the two brothers Haldane, Robert, the elder, as he had the deeper purse, had also the more powerful brain... Yet his munificent scheme for the evangelisation of Scotland, which led to the formation of the Congregational and Baptist bodies, and helped also the formation of the Evangelical Union was conditioned upon the remarkable preaching ability of Mr. James Haldane, his brother, or Captain Haldane, as he used to be called in those days.⁵⁹

⁵² Haldane, *Lives*, 553.

⁵³ Haldane, *Lives*, 632.

⁵⁴ Haldane, *Lives*, 632.

⁵⁵ Haldane, *Lives*, 632.

⁵⁶ Haldane, *Lives*, 632.

⁵⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 632.

⁵⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, 327-328, 366.

⁵⁹ ‘Origin of Congregationalism’, 74.

So understood, Haldane's open-air preaching was a source and not simply a feature of the evangelical movement of revival. His biographer states, 'Whatever may be said of open-air preaching, it was thus that Scotland was roused from its spiritual slumber'.⁶⁰ In the movement, therefore, at least up till 1805 if not 1808, Haldane's preaching was an event which gave it focus, success, credibility, impetus, and controversy.

While the success in stimulating a wider movement of activity and awakening was one reason why James Haldane's preaching was less significant after 1805, there was another less positive reason. This was the disruption which occurred in the ranks of the Independents who had emerged out of this period. After 1805 both James and Robert began to experiment, not always successfully, with various ecclesiological practices that became a source of disagreement among the Independents.⁶¹ These differences culminated in a division in 1808 into Congregational and Baptist factions. With respect to this matter, it is possible to argue that James and Robert were simply following through their freedom of conscience in relation to their interpretation of the Bible and church practice. On the other hand, it can be argued that their developed interest in congregational order distracted from the missionary goals of their activities. Whatever interpretation is followed the division irretrievably damaged the movement, their leadership in it, and limited the future wider significance of their activities Scotland wide.⁶² James certainly continued to preach in the open air through these times of troubles even if undertaking no longer tours. During 1808 and 1809 he was particularly 'zealous' in preaching around Edinburgh.⁶³ Perhaps this indicates an attempt to re-establish the earlier days of excitement. The exertions of this activity may also explain why during the time of division the Tabernacle congregation received more new converts than before.⁶⁴ It

⁶⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 271.

⁶¹ Talbot, *Search*, 91.

⁶² Wallace writes that, 'The disruption resulted in the loss of popularity, loss of influence and alienation of friends for the whole movement', *James*, 266, and again, 'The greatest force for evangelization in the history of Scotland had become a shattered ruin', 270.

⁶³ Haldane, *Lives*, 366.

⁶⁴ James Haldane cited Haldane, *Lives*, 474.

may also indicate that such preaching was what James was most suited to.⁶⁵ This notwithstanding, after 1808 the necessity, intensity, controversy, success, and significance, which accompanied the early years of his open-air preaching, waned.

The early years of James Haldane's open-air preaching, therefore, were the years of greatest intensity, significance, and success. They are also the years for which there is the greatest source material. As a result of these factors the earlier years of his preaching are the ones that I will concentrate primarily upon in my analysis. In addition, while he was accompanied by others, he was the primary and consistent figure in the early and most significant open-air preaching tours.⁶⁶ Consequently, I concentrate particularly on Haldane's open-air preaching although aware of the activities and contribution of the others.

4.7. Individual Salvation and Congregational Independency

In this section I analyse James Haldane's open-air preaching with reference to the radical of radical street performance. This relates to the transformational intent of his preaching. It also relates to changes brought about through his preaching which exceeded that which may have been originally intended. This is the transcendent nature of the radical. This analysis demonstrates that Haldane had a missional concern to see people experience personal salvation. It also shows that through the reports of his preaching he sought to reach audiences beyond those who attended the 'live' events. Subsequently, it was the friction and fracture created by his preaching among such wider audiences that necessitated the originally unintended move to congregational Independency.

⁶⁵ Dr Lindsay Alexander in the funeral sermon at James Haldane's funeral highlights the way in which James Haldane's character and previous experiences as a sea Captain prepared and suited him for the challenges of open-air preaching, cited Haldane, *Lives*, 268-269.

⁶⁶ Haldane, *Lives*, 142 and 174. His biographer states that he was the first to enter and the last to leave the field of open-air preaching, 366.

4.7.1. Preaching Personal Salvation

Haldane's preaching had a clear missional intent. His desire was to transform the religious culture of Scotland. This culture was perceived by Haldane and his associates to be one in which there was large scale ignorance 'of the first principles of religion'.⁶⁷ This ignorance was attributed primarily to the failure of the Established Church of Scotland under the control of the Moderate Party.⁶⁸ Ministry and mission were inadequate. Those who were not attending church were not being reached. Outlying districts were not being served. Moderate ministers when they preached were offering 'refuges of lies' instead of the gospel.⁶⁹ Consequently, Haldane's primary intended audience were those who for various reasons did not know the gospel as he and other Evangelicals understood it. His goal, therefore, was to warn them to 'flee from the wrath to come, and not to rest in an empty profession of religion'.⁷⁰ He invited them to do so by experiencing new birth by the Spirit through belief in the person of Jesus Christ 'who his ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree'.⁷¹ He did this by preaching because he understood it to be a God ordained method for offering such a transformative appeal and stimulating faith.⁷²

The transformation that Haldane sought for his audience was personal salvation by grace through faith in the person of Jesus Christ as the one who had secured their complete atonement. It was a transformation that would express itself in repentance and fruits of righteousness.⁷³ These fruits of righteousness, as understood, related

⁶⁷ Haldane, *Journal*, 3.

⁶⁸ The Moderate Party although not the largest group among the clergy were the best organised and controlled the Church of Scotland through their influence in the General Assembly until 1833. They emphasised rationalism, had relaxed doctrinal attitudes, favoured the gentry, supported patronage, disliked enthusiasm, had refined tastes, and felt that a primary task was to encourage better cultural attitudes among people. For such a description that lacks some of the bias found in the writings of their Evangelical opponents, Brown, *Religion*, 19.

⁶⁹ Haldane, *Journal*, 95.

⁷⁰ Letter to the Editor from the 'Persons engaged in the Scotch Itinerancy', *MM*, (July 1797), 335-336, 336.

⁷¹ Haldane, *Journal*, 4-5.

⁷² Haldane, *Journal*, 5.

⁷³ Haldane, *Journal*, 35.

primarily to matters of personal piety and morality. They were also socially conservative. With respect to the potential impact of the gospel on people's lives, Haldane opines:

Influenced, however, by the doctrines of the gospel, the lion becomes a lamb, and those who in times past were almost continually in all evil, become ready to do every good word and work. They are now taught effectually to deny all ungodliness; and, seeking to promote the welfare of all around them, to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world.⁷⁴

Thus for Haldane, the personal transformation sought through his preaching was such as would be good for the stability, order, and security of society.⁷⁵

4.7.2. 'Testimonies' to Success

In terms of the success of his radical intent, Haldane is reported to have attracted large numbers of people to hear him. During the 1797 tour crowds of tens, hundreds, and even thousands gathered.⁷⁶ At Kirkwall, in August 1797, his audiences were numbered between 3000 and 6000 people.⁷⁷ At Ayr, in 1800, he preached to crowds of between 3000 and 5000 attentive people on consecutive Sundays.⁷⁸ During his last extensive tour in 1805, people came out in their 'thousands' to hear him.⁷⁹ These crowds were composed of men and women of different ages including children.⁸⁰ It was also a noted feature of his preaching that it was popular with 'persons of all conditions in life'.⁸¹ This included 'even "carriage-folks"'.⁸² Thus, 'it was found, to

⁷⁴ Haldane, *Journal*, 97.

⁷⁵ Haldane, *Journal*, 97.

⁷⁶ At the other end of the scale there is a record of an intimated sermon in Fraserburgh to which no one turned up, Haldane, *Journal*, 44.

⁷⁷ Haldane, *Journal*, 58-59. These are figures as reported. They cannot be verified. As will be discussed, however, Haldane's preaching was certainly considered by opponents to be attracting enough interest to make him a cause for concern.

⁷⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, 258.

⁷⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 321.

⁸⁰ A letter written following the death of James Haldane by a Mrs. Morison and dated April 29, 1851, records the significant impression that James Haldane's preaching had upon her as a little school child, cited Haldane, *Lives*, 152-153.

⁸¹ Haldane, *Lives*, 151.

⁸² Philip, *Campbell*, 139.

the delight of his friends, that he could impress such hearers by his earnest and unstudied eloquence as truly as he had impressed the miners at Gilmerton'.⁸³ Success in attracting numbers was important. It provided validity for open-air preaching in the face of opposition. Thus in the introduction to the 1797 *Journal* Haldane states:

If we declare the truths of the gospel...in such a way that people continue disposed to hear us, we receive a sufficient testimony to our gifts to encourage us to proceed.⁸⁴

Haldane's open-air preaching, therefore, was successful in that it gathered large audiences.

Haldane's open-air preaching was also successful in terms of its desired transformational impact. With respect to the first tour it is claimed that, 'Multitudes dated their turning to God from the period of this awakening'.⁸⁵ In 1803, Mr John Cleghorn, then minister at Wick, gave a fascinating indication of the long term impact of Haldane's open-air preaching. In the *Missionary Magazine* of 1803 he writes that following 'conversation for several years' and 'careful observation' there were at least forty persons whose conversions could be attributed to Haldane's preaching there in 1797.⁸⁶ This report indicates a hesitancy to claim too quickly the lasting impact of Haldane's preaching. This is also apparent in other writings. Rather than claiming conversions, phrases such as 'the word was with power' are used to describe the preaching on the one hand and phrases such as, 'Many of the people appeared much affected, and in tears', to describe the response of the crowd on the other.⁸⁷ Such hesitancy can be related to the Calvinistic theology of Haldane and his contemporaries with desire that glory should go to the name of Jesus rather than themselves.⁸⁸ It also distanced them, in terms of positive publicity, from the unpopular and unsubstantiated claims made by Wesleyan preachers.⁸⁹ Perhaps

⁸³ 'Origin of Congregationalism', 79.

⁸⁴ Haldane, *Journal*, 11.

⁸⁵ Haldane, *Lives*, 174.

⁸⁶ John Cleghorn, 'Wick in Caithness', *MM*, (September 1803), 409-414, 410.

⁸⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 290, Haldane, *Journal*, 57.

⁸⁸ Haldane, *Journal*, 81-82.

⁸⁹ John Campbell, 'Dunkeld', *MM*, (July 1803), 318.

concerned, however, that such hesitancies hide the full impact of Haldane's preaching, his biographer, in retrospect, is prepared to claim, 'It would be difficult to name one, since the days of Whitfield, whose preaching was more signally blessed to the conversion of sinners than that of James Haldane'.⁹⁰ While James Haldane seems reticent in places to claim too much for the eternal significance of his preaching, he did suggest in the 1797 *Journal*, that as with the success of crowds gathered, so transformed lives validated his open-air preaching activities.⁹¹

4.7.3. Wider Audiences and Reactions

In terms of his radical intent the primary intended audience for Haldane's preaching were people who for various reasons were ignorant of the gospel either through their own neglect or that of others. Beyond the live audiences, however, he also had other audiences in mind. These were primarily the Moderates within the Established Church and Evangelicals within, and beyond it. The publication of the *Journal* of Haldane's first open-air preaching tour of 1797 can be seen as a deliberate attempt to address these wider audiences. This is indicated by the apologetic introduction and conclusion designed to address opposition and encourage support. With respect to Moderate ministers, he says his desire is that they may reconsider their position and become 'faithful and laborious'.⁹² With respect to Evangelicals, he writes to encourage them in their prayers and missionary labours.⁹³ First published in the spring of 1798 the *Journal* quickly ran to three editions. So popular was the first that the second was required to be published within a month.⁹⁴ These sales indicate something of the interest which the tour and the *Journal* created.

Some of the interest created by the ending of the tour and the publication of the *Journal* was strongly hostile. 'Numerous publications rolled off the press in which

⁹⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 653, spelling 'Whitfield' by Haldane.

⁹¹ Haldane, *Journal*, 14

⁹² Haldane, *Journal*, 29.

⁹³ Haldane, *Journal*, 96-97.

⁹⁴ Wallace, *James*, 81.

both the tour and the men who had participated in it were denounced in scathing terms'.⁹⁵ As would be expected criticisms came from Moderates within the Established Church.⁹⁶ Significantly, however, criticism also came from Evangelicals regarding the methods used. These included the practice of 'lay preaching' and the practice of attacking the doctrines of particular Moderate ministers in the open-air preaching events.⁹⁷ Both activities were documented and defended in the *Journal*. Haldane, however, was sensitive to the wider Evangelical opinion. It was in deference to it that the practice of attacking the doctrine of particular ministers was abandoned when he undertook his second tour in 1798.⁹⁸

Despite the criticisms that were provoked the *Journal* indicated that Haldane's open-air preaching had been successful both in attracting crowds and making an impression. This galvanised some Evangelicals in support of the practice. Mr. John Campbell was originally ambivalent to Haldane's itinerant open-air preaching.⁹⁹ After the first tour, however, he wrote to Lady Leven stating 'now their plan vindicates itself to me: for they are not preaching to the church but to the world'.¹⁰⁰ In turn, the clear success of this tour was one of the stated immediate factors that encouraged Campbell, Haldane, and others to found the 'Society for the Propagation of the Gospel at Home' in 1797.¹⁰¹ Greville Ewing was at this time minister of Lady Glenorchy's Chapel in Edinburgh and editor of the *Missionary Magazine*.¹⁰² In

⁹⁵ Wallace, *James*, 77.

⁹⁶ Rev. W. M. Moodie, *A Cobbler's Remarks on a Journal of a tour Through the Northern Counties of Scotland* (Edinburgh [n.p.] 1798). This was published anonymously but was known to have been written by Moodie.

⁹⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 181.

⁹⁸ Letter to the Editor of the *Missionary Magazine* from James Haldane and John Aikman, *MM* (July 1798), 331-332, 332.

⁹⁹ John Campbell was already at this time founder of the Edinburgh Tract Society and a correspondent with the Rev John Newton and would later become a London minister and overseas missionary. Kinniburgh, *Fathers*, 229-245 for biographical sketch.

¹⁰⁰ Campbell, cited Philip, *Campbell*, 139. The Countess of Leven was a friend of Whitefield, an associate of the Countess of Huntingdon, and a member of the aristocracy who favoured evangelical renewal, Haldane, *Lives*, 117.

¹⁰¹ *An Account of the Proceedings of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1799), 5, hereafter SPGH.

¹⁰² Kinniburgh, *Fathers*, 246-265, for biographical sketch.

December 1797, he preached a sermon in defence of itinerant and field preaching'.¹⁰³ This was clearly an attempt to answer the criticisms that Haldane's preaching tour had provoked. Ewing resigned from the Established Church in December 1798 to join with the Haldanes in their missionary activities and plans. As well as hostile criticism, therefore, the first preaching as reported brought about change as it encouraged people to come together in co-operation around a particular preaching strategy.

In terms of his wider audiences, therefore, Haldane's first open-air preaching galvanised support and created friction. The friction was created not simply between Moderates and Evangelicals but also between Evangelicals who favoured the methods and those who did not. This friction was intensified in a number of ways after 1797. Haldane continued to engage in open-air preaching tours attracting crowds and arousing opposition. The SPGH sent out catechists and itinerant preachers to various areas of Scotland. Supporters of the open-air preaching of Haldane and the SPGH made strong criticisms of the Established Church. One such critic was Rowland Hill. Hill was an Anglican evangelist who under the auspices of the SPGH visited Scotland on two preaching tours in 1798 and 1799. In his 'Journals' of these tours he strongly criticised not only parish ministers but the nature of traditional ministry itself.¹⁰⁴ In response to this the various Presbyterian Church groups, both Seceder and Established, acted against the itinerants and their activities.¹⁰⁵ Most noteworthy were the actions of the Established Church. In response to petitions from various Presbyteries on the 28th May 1799 the General Assembly issued a 'Declaratory Act' against unqualified ministers and preachers. This Act refused to recognise ministers not licensed by the Established Church. It also declared that no support should be given by Established ministers to such unlicensed preachers.¹⁰⁶ This was accompanied by a 'Pastoral Admonition', dated June 3rd 1799, which was sent out to be read in churches warning them against

¹⁰³ Ewing, Greville., *A Defence of Itinerant and Field Preaching: A Sermon preached before The Society for Gratis Sabbath Schools, On the 24th of December 1797, In Lady Glenorchy's Chapel, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1799).

¹⁰⁴ Lovegrove, 'A set', 74.

¹⁰⁵ Lovegrove, 'A set', 66.

¹⁰⁶ 'Declaratory Act', 868-869

vagrant preachers and those who may engage in establishing Sunday Schools.¹⁰⁷ The 'Declaratory Act' severed the links between the Evangelicals within the Established Church and the supporters of itinerant open-air preaching. This was the case not simply because of what it said but because the Establishment Evangelicals voted with the Moderates on this matter at the General Assembly.¹⁰⁸ When two years later, Dr Erskine, leader of the Evangelical Party within the Established Church, criticised Haldane's support of lay-preaching 'the fracture within Scottish evangelicalism was more or less complete'.¹⁰⁹

The consequence of the friction, therefore, created by the open-air preaching of Haldane and others was a fracture not simply with the Moderates but with other Evangelicals. Simultaneously, however, the success of his preaching generated shared activity and in turn through this, new church polity. People of a common mind on evangelism were brought together around a particular strategy of preaching. This was concretised with the formation of the SPGH. In the wake of this in 1798 the plan was established to train preachers and establish preaching stations on the model of Whitefield's Tabernacles in the main cities of Scotland.¹¹⁰ The first of these was opened in 'the Circus', a former theatre in Edinburgh, in July 1798.¹¹¹ In all of these actions it was claimed that the intention was to promote mission, not to start another sect or denomination.¹¹² James and his brother from the beginning operated within the Established Church of which they were members. Perhaps in this they were at best naive. For opposition accompanied by success meant that by 1799 the Haldanes and their colleagues had found it impossible to remain within the Established Church and necessary instead to pursue a course of increasing congregational Independency in order to facilitate the sort of mission they wished to pursue and the discipleship they wished to develop.¹¹³ Accordingly:

¹⁰⁷ 'Pastoral Admonition', 870-873.

¹⁰⁸ Lovegrove, 'A set', 78-79.

¹⁰⁹ Lovegrove, 'A set', 79.

¹¹⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 216.

¹¹¹ Waugh, 'Converging', 57.

¹¹² Letter from, 'Persons engaged in the Scotch Itinerancy', 336; *An Account of the Proceedings*, 2; Haldane, *Lives*, 224.

¹¹³ Lovegrove, 'A set', 79, Talbot, *Search*, 83-84.

Unresting, unhasting, the Haldanes and their colleagues pursued the work. Preaching tours were undertaken, itinerants were sent forth, Churches were organised and, from the Orkneys to Dumfries, were linked in a holy fellowship.¹¹⁴

The varied reactions, therefore, that were provoked among Haldanes wider audiences, by the transgressive nature of open-air preaching in relation to established practice, created the context in which the change which occurred transcended that of the primary intent.

Haldane's open-air preaching was radical in its transformative intent. With respect to its primary intended audiences the goal was personally religious and socially conservative. Other wider audiences, however, were also reached through reports and publications. The goal with respect to these was to challenge Moderates and to encourage Evangelicals in home missionary activity. In a sense this was achieved through the wider evangelical awakening which the success of the preaching stimulated. Yet, the course that the change took in this process transcended the initial desire not to create another sect or denomination. For out of the friction created, at which the practice of open-air preaching was at the centre, there emerged a stream of Scottish Independency which in turn led to the formation of Congregational and Baptist churches.

4.8. Conflict and Contest in the Streets

During James Haldane's itinerant preaching activities of both longer and shorter durations, which formed the focus of controversy, he preached in a variety of different specific locations. Throughout the first seven days of the first tour, the preachers used a 'school-room', the 'open-air', a 'hospital', the town 'cross', a 'Masons hall', a 'church-yard', a 'market-place', the 'top of a walled stair', 'the street', and a 'meeting-house'.¹¹⁵ As a layperson, Haldane was not licensed to preach in church buildings. His ordination to the Tabernacle in 1799 was not recognised by the Established Church. During his tours church buildings were occasionally offered

¹¹⁴ Waugh, 'Converging', 61.

¹¹⁵ Haldane, *Journal*, 37-41.

to him by supporters. The 'Declaratory Act' of 1799, however, made this even more unlikely. The primary location for Haldane's itinerant preaching, therefore, was in various outdoor locations. The decision to use the open-air, however, was more than an act of forced necessity. It was related to his radical intent. In seeking to transform the religious culture of Scotland, the open air was regarded as the location that would provide the greatest access to those he wished to reach. In this section, therefore, I will analyse Haldane's open-air preaching with reference to the concept of the streets in radical street performance. This demonstrates the importance of the location in relation to his missional radical intent of reaching people with the gospel. For Haldane, however, the open air, was also a space of ideological contest and conflict. As such, I argue that certain features of Haldane's open-air preaching, gave it a socio-political quality and socially dramatic nature as an event.

4.8.1. Reaching the 'Careless and Idle'

For Haldane, the open air was a location of choice because it enabled him to reach the greatest number of people. Not only so but people including those who would not normally voluntarily attend church. In the *Journal* of the 1797 preaching tour he notes that when the itinerants preached in buildings the majority of the congregation were those who attended church. In contrast, the open air allowed them to gather by novelty, 'idle' and 'careless' people who would not normally attend a church.¹¹⁶ A similar point regarding the missional nature of Haldane's open-air preaching is made by Ewing in his *Defence* of open-air preaching. He acknowledges that outdoor preaching was not unknown in Scotland. There was preaching associated with outdoor communion services. Such, however, he does not claim as a historic precursor. Rather, the difference he says is somewhat 'obvious'. Preaching which took place at the communion services was designed for those who would have attended church but could not get in. In contrast, the open-air preaching that he was advocating:

¹¹⁶ Haldane, *Journal*, 30.

is to call those who are going about their business and amusements, those who are far from stated ordinances, those who might never think of their souls at all, but for his mode of catching their attention.¹¹⁷

The itinerant open-air preaching, defended by Ewing and carried out by Haldane and others, therefore, was preaching which took place outdoors because its practitioners saw the missional benefits of the location for reaching those with whom they might not otherwise gain contact.

Since the intent of Haldane and his associates was to reach people with whom they may not otherwise have contact they chose public locations for their open-air preaching. These were locations where people might gather, such as at town crosses or places where they were already gathering, such as in the streets. A variety of times throughout the day were used. If a time or place proved unsuccessful, another would be tried.¹¹⁸ The likelihood of large gatherings of people brought together for other purposes drew Haldane and his colleagues to particular locations. Thus Haldane decided to go to Kirkwall because he heard that there was to be a 'fair' held there, at which there would be large numbers of people from the different Orkney isles.¹¹⁹ The use of the open air was a strategic choice for Haldane in that it gave access to people. In the language of radical street performance the open air was regarded as a 'gateway to the masses.'¹²⁰ Accordingly, Haldane would utilise any presenting opportunity to preach including on boats in which he was travelling.¹²¹

Ewing's *Defence* of missional open-air preaching, referred to above, requires further comment with respect to the irregular nature of Haldane preaching in the streets. As indicated, not least through Scottish Communion services, outdoor preaching was not unknown in Scotland's recent history. Itinerant missional open-air preaching was also not unknown. Both George Whitefield and John Wesley made several visits to

¹¹⁷ Ewing, *Defence*, 21.

¹¹⁸ Haldane, *Journal*, 44.

¹¹⁹ Haldane, *Journal*, 51.

¹²⁰ Cohen-Cruz, 'Introduction', 2.

¹²¹ Haldane, *Journal*, 51.

Scotland beginning with Whitefield in 1741 and ending with Wesley in 1790.¹²² Both attracted large crowds.¹²³ The geographical scope of Whitefield's preaching, however, was limited.¹²⁴ Wesley's preaching also failed to make a long term impact in terms of the development of Methodism in Scotland.¹²⁵ In 1796, James Haldane accompanied the Rev. Charles Simeon on a tour of the Highlands during which some preaching took place though this was of a very limited nature and Haldane as a layman did not preach. Just prior to Haldane departing on his first tour the Relief Church also instigated a plan of itinerancy to spread the gospel at home.¹²⁶ They sent out two missionaries to Kintyre with instructions among other things to preach the gospel. One of them, however, became involved in political matters and the whole experiment ended in failure.¹²⁷ While these ventures meant that open-air preaching was not unknown in Scotland, evangelical open-air itinerancy was yet an irregular practice with which many people would have been unfamiliar.

The irregularity and corresponding novelty of Haldane's open-air preaching is indicated by the fact that when he preached in the streets, it was an activity that some supportive evangelical 'brethren' thought going too far.¹²⁸ It was a practice, as Haldane acknowledged in his *Journal*, with which people found 'fault'.¹²⁹ In turn, the 'Pastoral Admonition' of 1799 complained that the preachers gathered people together 'in fields, or in places not intended for public worship'.¹³⁰ On the other hand, however, its irregular nature proved a source of novel interest and attraction to others. One eye witness, Mrs McNeil, indicates that the open air location was one of the features of Haldane's preaching that was creating such a stir and caused her to

¹²² Dugald Butler, *John Wesley and George Whitefield In Scotland: The Influence of the Oxford Methodists on Scottish Religion* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1898).

¹²³ Brown, *Religion*, 36.

¹²⁴ Wallace, *James*, 58.

¹²⁵ Brown discusses some of the possible reasons for this, *Religion*, 36-37.

¹²⁶ Waugh, 'Converging', 67.

¹²⁷ Escott, *History*, 63.

¹²⁸ Letter from James Haldane to John Campbell dated July 28th 1797, cited Haldane, *Lives*, 149.

¹²⁹ Haldane, *Journal*, 29.

¹³⁰ 'Pastoral Admonition', 871.

immediately rush off to hear him at Thurso in 1797.¹³¹ Wallace articulates well the significance of the location in the creation of the dynamic that stimulated attention when he writes,

Its novelty, hazard and daring made it very attractive to multitudes. That a man would brave the changeable Scottish weather, use the vast spaces as a temple and a dull or shining sky as a sounding board and stand up at almost any hour of the day or night to preach was magnetic and appealing.¹³²

Therefore, while not unknown in Scotland prior to his activities, the irregularity of missional open-air preaching was a feature of Haldane's activity that contributed both to its opposition and its appeal.

4.8.2. Contesting the Powers

For Haldane, despite the irregularity of the location, the open air was regarded as a location in which he could reach people particularly those who would not normally attend a church service. It was also a location of ideological contest. First and foremost, he preached in the open air in order to warn people to flee from the wrath which was to come. He was intervening in the ignorance of true religion. He was contesting unbelief. Haldane described his activities in terms of life saving medical care.¹³³ Campbell described them as attacking 'the Kingdom of Satan'.¹³⁴ In this way, Haldane's preaching was a Word against the powers, supernaturally understood.

His preaching, however, also involved him in challenging aspects of the cultural status quo. This brought him into conflict with the ideologies, powers, and structures which sought to maintain it. This intensified both the opposition to and interest in his preaching. This gave the preaching a socially dramatic nature and a socio-political quality. This was not because Haldane preached on political themes. Rather, it was

¹³¹ Mrs McNeil, letter dated 20th March, 1851, cited Haldane, *Lives*, 167-170, 168.

¹³² Wallace, *James*, 308.

¹³³ Haldane, *Journal*, 7-8.

¹³⁴ Letter from John Campbell to a Mr. Hardcastle in the Spring of 1800 cited in Haldane, *Lives*, 257.

because of the cultural context in which he preached and certain features of his preaching. The late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in Scotland was a period of ‘the fracturing of time-honoured social structures’ in rural areas and the creation of ‘new’ and ‘unsettled’ ones in urban areas.¹³⁵ In this situation the events of the French Revolution of 1792 had on the one hand encouraged the development of a radical political consciousness among some and on the other a dread among the ‘wealthy and privileged’.¹³⁶ This dread was largely shared by the church as part of the ancient regime in Scotland not least in the light of the anti-religious nature of the French Revolution. For them, the gathering of crowds, the distribution of literature, and the challenging of established principles and practices, whatever the purpose including religious, carried an element of social threat to the Establishment in all its forms. For other sections of the population, however, religious revival and dissent offered an expression of and means for advancing wider socio-political concerns.¹³⁷ James Haldane’s open-air preaching took place against this wider socio-religious context.¹³⁸ Within this context, through the nature of his open-air preaching, he challenged church teaching, resisted established conventions, and affirmed public spaces as locations where preaching could freely take place. In this respect, it is at least interesting to note, the comment by Cohen-Cruz that radical street performers are often present in periods of ‘social flux - either leading up to, during or just after a shift in the status quo’.¹³⁹

One of the areas in which Haldane challenged the status quo was reference to church teaching. To highlight and to preach against the ignorance of true religion in Scotland was at the very least implicitly critical of the existing churches and their teaching, and in particular the Established Church of Scotland. During his first tour,

¹³⁵ Meek and Murray, ‘Early’, 28.

¹³⁶ Escott, *History*, 49.

¹³⁷ Callum G. Brown, ‘Protest in the Pews: Interpreting Presbyterianism and Society in Fracture During the Scottish Economic Revolution’ in *Conflict and Stability in Scottish Society 1700-1850* ed. by T. M. Devine (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1990), 83-105.

¹³⁸ I note that Robert Haldane was accused of being a supporter of the French Revolution, views which his biographer says were ‘exaggerated and misrepresented, by those who wished to cast discredit on his designs for the propagation of Christianity’ and against which he had to defend himself, Haldane, *Lives*, 74-84, 75.

¹³⁹ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 6.

Haldane made such criticisms explicit and specific, with reference to the doctrine contained in the sermons of particular ministers. This appears to have been a pre-determined plan of attack.¹⁴⁰ The *Journal* gives a detailed description of the first time this was done at Kirriemuir on the 16th July 1797.¹⁴¹ The itinerants attended the morning service and listened to the sermon. In the evening they targeted as their audience the congregation of that church as they left the evening worship service. In doing so, with reference to the morning service, ‘They told the people plainly, that what they had heard was not the gospel’.¹⁴² Contrary to the ministers preaching they explained that the gospel:

was a dispensation wholly of grace, and that it was completely contradictory, both to scripture and to fact, to represent man as capable of doing any thing in order to render himself acceptable to God.¹⁴³

They declared that they wished the minister no ill will and that they ‘sincerely prayed to God, that he might give him repentance to the acknowledgement of truth’.¹⁴⁴ Such ‘caustic methods’ had not been known in Scotland since the time of the Covenanters.¹⁴⁵ Haldane defended it with reference no less than to the preaching of Jesus and the apostles against the Pharisees and false teaching.¹⁴⁶

The feature that made such criticisms so stinging, however, was not only what was said but where it was said. For Haldane would criticise the teaching of parish ministers in their own parishes, at times outside their own churches, and often did so on the same or next day to the one in which the offending sermon had been given. At Kirriemuir, the itinerants deliberately gathered at a time and place where the evening congregation of the church would be passing. They utilised the location along with the controversy of their content and turned passers-by into an audience.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁰ Wallace, *James*, 60.

¹⁴¹ Haldane, *Journal*, 38-40.

¹⁴² Haldane, *Journal*, 40.

¹⁴³ Haldane, *Journal*, 40.

¹⁴⁴ Haldane, *Journal*, 40.

¹⁴⁵ Wallace, *James*, 62.

¹⁴⁶ Haldane, *Journal*, 23.

¹⁴⁷ Haldane, *Journal*, 39.

Criticism of the teaching of Moderate ministers provoked opposition from those in authority in the Established Church. The boldness with which Haldane and the others did this was considered to be a threat to 'order' not simply in church but in society.¹⁴⁸ For Haldane, however, it allowed him to distinguish the content of the gospel as he preached it, from that which was being heard in their church.¹⁴⁹ It also aligned him with popular disaffection to the Established Church and its Moderate ministers.¹⁵⁰ Consequently, to criticise ministers who were already unpopular with many congregants, would clearly gain a positive hearing.¹⁵¹ While Haldane would abandon this strategy on later tours his biographer considers that the approach was not only necessary but also contributed to the first tour being the one which 'more abundant fruits were gathered' than from any other.¹⁵²

There was, however, another less contentious side to the contest regarding what constituted gospel truth. This was the appeal of the gospel message being offered. If the Scotland of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was undergoing social change it was also 'a highly religious society'.¹⁵³ As such it was influenced to greater and lesser extents by theological Calvinism. Haldane's message was Calvinistic in doctrine. There is little evidence that his fundamental doctrine formed the content of specific criticism and opposition. What he said was in accordance with the Westminster Confession of Faith.¹⁵⁴ Yet, it was a form of Calvinism that emphasised grace and had something of an 'emotional appeal' which was lacking both in the religion of the Moderates and Evangelicals in the Established Church at this time.¹⁵⁵ While Calvinist in doctrine Haldane could appeal to people's hearts and minds like a Wesleyan preacher.¹⁵⁶ In Haldane's gospel message, directed to the

¹⁴⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, 181.

¹⁴⁹ Haldane, *Journal*, 24.

¹⁵⁰ Brown, *Religion*, 19.

¹⁵¹ Wallace, *James*, 63.

¹⁵² Haldane, *Lives*, 181. Complaints were still being made about these attacks on ministers in the 'Pastoral Admonition', 871.

¹⁵³ Brown, 'Protest', 101.

¹⁵⁴ James Ross, *A History of Congregational Independency in Scotland* (James MacLehose & Sons: Glasgow, 1900), 73.

¹⁵⁵ Lovegrove, 'A set', 63.

¹⁵⁶ 'Origin of Congregationalism', 83.

individual and their improvement, there was something familiar but also aspirational. It could attract those distressed by the upheavals of the time offering certainty and security.¹⁵⁷ It could also appeal, however, to those who sought their own betterment in the changing nature of society.¹⁵⁸ In contesting the teaching of Moderate ministers, therefore, Haldane's gospel message had attraction and appeal to a variety of groups within society.

By challenging the teaching of ministers in the Established Church, Haldane was ultimately considered to be going against the conventions of a stable society. Another feature of his open-air preaching considered a threat to order within the church and beyond was the fact that he preached as a layperson and in turn promoted such preaching. Preaching was properly considered the task for ordained clergy. Considerable discussion, therefore, took place over the legitimacy of lay-preaching not only between Moderates and Evangelicals but between Evangelicals and Evangelicals.¹⁵⁹ Haldane and his supporters defended themselves vigorously. They appealed to Scripture, to history, to the example from England, and to necessity, to defend the practice.¹⁶⁰ Despite this, the 'Pastoral Admonition' demonstrates the approbation and fear that it created. There, the lay preachers are presented as having no regard for the 'Divine Institution' of 'a well educated and regularly ordained ministry' which has been the 'form' of things from the time of Christ himself.¹⁶¹ They operated out-with established principles and in places 'not intended for public worship'.¹⁶² As a consequence of this, against the backdrop of the violence, anti-government, and anti-religious nature of the French Revolution, the instruction given in the 'Pastoral Admonition', was that lay preachers had to be avoided as 'a set of men, whose proceedings threaten no small disorder to the country'.¹⁶³ James Ross,

¹⁵⁷ Escott, *History*, 59

¹⁵⁸ Brown, 'Protest', 100-101.

¹⁵⁹ Some of this discussion took place through the *Missionary Magazine*, 'Inquiry? Who Have a Right to Preach the Gospel?', *MM*, (July 1797), 317-323.

¹⁶⁰ Haldane, *Journal*, 5-18.

¹⁶¹ 'Pastoral Admonition', 871-873.

¹⁶² 'Pastoral Admonition', 871.

¹⁶³ 'Pastoral Admonition', 871.

who considers lay-preaching to be one of the primary causes of controversy related to Haldane and the SPGH, notes how the unconventional nature of the practice which Haldane and others engaged in created opposition beyond the Established Church:

The mere fact of the 'missionaries' having a message of their own, and of having adopted new methods of delivering it, was sufficient to array against them all the official representatives of the various sects of the time, and they opposed the new men and the new ways as strenuously as they opposed each other.¹⁶⁴

As with the other areas of contest Haldane's practice, however, not only aroused opposition but created interest, support, and appeal.¹⁶⁵

In addition to Haldane's open-air preaching contesting for his understanding of gospel truth and challenging established institutional conventions, it also brought him into conflict over the matter of where preaching could legitimately take place. Sometimes at issue was the matter of the difference between private and public space. Such a matter arose early in the first tour. Haldane advertised that he would preach a sermon at College Close in Aberdeen on Sunday July 23rd 1797.¹⁶⁶ He was called before the magistrate, however, where it was made clear that he should not have announced a sermon without the permission of the Professors because this was not a public place.¹⁶⁷ Haldane acknowledged that they had 'done wrong' and that this was due to 'misinformation'.¹⁶⁸ He offered to find another place although he was granted permission to go ahead in that location.¹⁶⁹ On other occasions of contested space with respect to matters of obstruction and private property, Haldane shows a similar willingness to withdraw to alternative venues.¹⁷⁰

While on some issues of contested space Haldane on occasions demonstrates a willingness to concede ground, he would not do so, however, with respect to his

¹⁶⁴ Ross, *History*, 74.

¹⁶⁵ The attraction of Haldane's particular persona including his social status will be demonstrated and discussed further below.

¹⁶⁶ Haldane, *Journal*, 42.

¹⁶⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 150.

¹⁶⁸ Haldane, *Journal*, 42.

¹⁶⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 150.

¹⁷⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 185 and 371.

fundamental legal right to preach outdoors in public space. During his 1798 tour with Aikman he was threatened with arrest if he preached the following day. In response to the threats he asserted his legal right to preach in public. The drama of the confrontation is captured in his biographer's recounting of the incident:

He was threatened with imprisonment if he should preach on the following day, as he had announced; but he assured the magistrates that menaces without lawful sanction were of no avail. He would not indeed preach at the cross, or at any place to which just exception might be taken, but in preaching out of doors he infringed no law, and on the contrary was protected by the Toleration Act. 'Depend upon it,' said one of them, - 'depend upon it, that you will be arrested.' The reply was characteristic, 'And depend upon it, Sir, I shall be punctual to my appointment.' He was on the ground at the appointed time, and preached to a great audience without molestation.¹⁷¹

During his tour in 1800 with Campbell a similar incident occurred in Kintyre. Haldane was met by a military man who told him 'that the magistrates had resolved to allow no more field-preaching'.¹⁷² In response:

Mr. James Haldane plainly told the gallant Major, as he had told the magistrates at Ayr, that the justices were exceeding their powers, that such an illegal mandate should not be obeyed, and that he would certainly preach at the places where sermons had already been intimated.¹⁷³

Haldane then proceeded to preach while the Major sat on his horse watching 'but without mustering courage to offer any disruption'.¹⁷⁴ Events in Kintyre would lead to the arrest of Campbell and Haldane. When taken to the Sheriff of Argyll Haldane would argue for their freedom to preach and both would be released.¹⁷⁵ The significance of this was 'the lawfulness of field-preaching admitted by the highest judicial authority of the county'.¹⁷⁶ In addition, it created extra interest in the open-air preaching event. Both at Ayr and Kintyre larger crowds are reported as having turned out to hear Haldane as a consequence of the controversy.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷¹ Haldane, *Lives*, 185. For a slightly different but no less dramatic account of this incident see a letter sent by a Mr. Watson to Alexander and dated April 9th, 1851, recorded in, *Lives*, 185-187.

¹⁷² Haldane, *Lives*, 261, also Philip, *Campbell*, 287.

¹⁷³ Haldane, *Lives*, 261, also Philip, *Campbell*, 287.

¹⁷⁴ Haldane, *Lives*, 261, also Philip, *Campbell*, 287.

¹⁷⁵ Haldane, *Lives*, 264, also Philip, *Campbell*, 287-290.

¹⁷⁶ Haldane, *Lives*, 264.

¹⁷⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 186 and 264.

For Haldane open-air locations were the gateway to the masses. This was not simply a matter of numbers but of the nature of the people who could be reached there. Despite the irregularity of the practice, therefore, Haldane and his colleagues were prepared to preach in the open air. In order to reach people, however, Haldane had to contest not simply with people's ignorance of the gospel as he understood it but with the institutional powers and practices that maintained the status quo in terms of the nature of the gospel, his right as a layperson to preach, and the legal freedoms to do so in public space. This notwithstanding Haldane contested power from a position of power, economic security, and social status. Some of the conflicts convey the sense of aristocratic indignation if not arrogance. In addition, his actions were not about freedom of speech but about the freedom to preach the Christian gospel. Be this as it may, in the socio-religious context of his time, his actions were considered to pose religious, social, and political threat. This added to the socially dramatic nature and novelty of his preaching as an event.

4.9. The 'Captain' Preacher

A performance is an event of showing doing. From the perspective of radical street performance it is an event where art, ideology, and the dramatic nature of life converge. The irregularity and novelty, the contest and conflict, associated with James Haldane's preaching, were part of the performance. They contributed to the opposition aroused, the support gained, and the subsequent radical outcomes. This has been previously discussed in the analysis of the radical and the streets in his preaching. In this section, therefore, in terms of the performance of Haldane's preaching, I concentrate on the significance of his persona, the use of theatrical acts of presentation, and Haldane's particular skills as an open-air preacher. Through my analysis these have all emerged as features that contributed to his ability to gather an audience and gain a hearing, for his evangelical understanding of the gospel.

4.9.1. A 'Commanding Presence'

A key factor in the success of Haldane's open-air preaching was Haldane himself, and the persona he conveyed. Contrasting Haldane's itinerant open-air preaching with earlier precursors Escott claims:

this was of a different type. James Haldane was young and handsome, of commanding presence and powerful voice. The fact that he had the education and the bearing of a gentleman, and had mounted the pulpit from the quarterdeck gave a certain piquancy to his utterance.¹⁷⁸

Escott's description of Haldane, the impression he conveyed, and the significance of his persona in attracting attention and gaining a hearing can be discussed with reference to a number of features of Haldane's preaching persona.

First, there were his physical characteristics in relation to his history and background. The importance of these is apparent in a description of Haldane's preaching at a river near Banff in 1797. In a letter from a Mrs Morison dated April 29th 1851 which contains her now mature recollections of her experience as a young girl, she recalls:

Captain Haldane arrived on horseback at the place where the people were assembled to hear him. He dismounted, and gave his horse to the charge of another gentleman who stood by. He was then a young man, under thirty years of age, and had on a blue great coat, braided in front, after the fashion of the times. He also wore powder, and his hair tied behind, as was then usual for gentlemen. And I can never forget the impressions which fell on my young heart, as your father, in a distinct, clear, and manly tone began to address the thoughtless multitude that had been attracted to hear him.¹⁷⁹

From this letter it appears that Haldane's status, actions, age, dress, hair, demeanour, and history, all played a part in the performance of his preaching and the impression it created. This is reinforced by other eye-witness accounts. Mrs McNeil describes her memory of first impression of James Haldane preaching at Thurso in 1797.

I went with my cousin to the place. He was standing on the top of an outer stair, dressed in a gray coat, with tied hair, and powdered. But I think I shall never forget the fervour and divine unction with which he proclaimed the Gospel of mercy.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Escott, *History*, 58.

¹⁷⁹ Morison letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 153.

¹⁸⁰ McNeil letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 168.

Indeed, Mrs McNeil's descriptions of admiration for Haldane are such that she confesses she fears them to be almost 'idolatrous'.¹⁸¹ Again, there are William Watson's recollections of Haldane preaching at Ayr in 1798 about which he writes:

Although more than fifty years have run their course since these things were done, remembrance is as fresh on my memory as if they were only the transactions of yesterday. In my imagination, I see Mr. James Haldane's manly form and commanding attitude, in youthful but dignified zeal, pouring out the fullness of his soul a free, full, and everlasting salvation to the wondering multitude, who by the expression on their faces seemed to say, 'We have heard strange things to-day'.¹⁸²

As the above recollections indicate, Haldane's physical characteristics and associated history created a particularly impressive preaching persona. A persona that was heroic and at times romantic in its appeal at least to some of those upon whom his preaching had a transformative impact.

Second, and following on from the above, there was the significance of his demographic characteristics in relation to the persona he conveyed. As previously discussed, Haldane preached as a layperson, which was a source of controversy and conflict. He also preached, however, as a layperson of social status and wealth. This proved to be a source of interest and appeal perhaps also encouraging people in the trustworthiness of what he was doing and saying. Writing about the 1797 tour and the visit to Aberdeen, Haldane's biographer writes, 'It might be said that the whole population of Aberdeen turned out by thousands to hear an East India Captain. There was novelty in the fact'.¹⁸³ Peter Grant, pastor of the congregational church at Blairgowrie, with reference to the crowds that gathered to hear Haldane on his 1805 tour writes, 'The novelty of a field-preacher, especially a gentleman, attracted multitudes'.¹⁸⁴ That Haldane and his companions did not take a collection for their preaching reinforced their elevated social status and increased interest in their activity. In personal testimony regarding Haldane and Aikman's visit to Ayr, Mr Watson indicates that he had no interest to go hear 'men who preach in the street for bawbees'.¹⁸⁵ When, however, he heard that they were 'independent gentlemen', it

¹⁸¹ McNeil letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 168.

¹⁸² Watson letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 187.

¹⁸³ Haldane, *Lives*, 151.

¹⁸⁴ Peter Grant cited Haldane, *Lives*, 321.

¹⁸⁵ Watson letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 186.

appeared to him ‘so extraordinary’ that he resolved to go at once and hear them.¹⁸⁶ Campbell notes a similar interest created in 1800 by the fact that he and Haldane took no collection.¹⁸⁷ While Haldane’s gentleman status and former history would serve him well in the conflicts that his preaching would bring it also contributed to the novelty that made his open-air preaching a dramatic event.

Third, there was the persuasive nature of his conveyed attitudes and psychological characteristics. In the recollections above, his preaching is described as delivered with ‘fervour’, ‘a commanding attitude’, and ‘dignified zeal’. In his preaching he came across ‘earnest’ and ‘solemn’.¹⁸⁸ Such solemnity, however, was matched by an energy that could be described as ‘power’ and even ‘divine unction’.¹⁸⁹ The way in which these characteristics came through his preaching indicated an ‘affectionate’ concern for those to whom he preached.¹⁹⁰ Mrs McNeil writes, ‘He threw his whole soul into his subject, and commended the truth to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God’.¹⁹¹ He preached ‘heart to heart’ out of his own experience of need and forgiveness.¹⁹² He poured out his soul to the multitudes.¹⁹³ Yet, in application and invitation it would appear that he could make appeal to the individual conscience of each one gathered.¹⁹⁴ It was his ‘power, energy, and earnestness’ as a preacher that caused Dr. Charles Stuart of Dunearn to describe Haldane as ‘the Boanerges of the new movement’.¹⁹⁵ Likewise, it was such qualities coming through that overcame the prejudices of a Mr Cowie of Huntly, a member of the Anti-Burgher Synod, towards the open-air preaching of Haldane.¹⁹⁶ His earnestness and direct appeals to the conscience were a reason why many people gathered and were affected by his open-

¹⁸⁶ Watson letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 186.

¹⁸⁷ Campbell cited Haldane, *Lives*, 258.

¹⁸⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, 152, 166.

¹⁸⁹ McNeil letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 168

¹⁹⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 141.

¹⁹¹ McNeil letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 169.

¹⁹² Haldane, *Lives*, 177.

¹⁹³ Watson letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 187.

¹⁹⁴ Haldane, *Lives*, 154.

¹⁹⁵ Haldane, *Lives*, 140.

¹⁹⁶ Haldane, *Lives*, 241.

air preaching.¹⁹⁷ He came across as one who was concerned for and seriously committed to his subject, his task, and his audiences.

Following on from the above, in the *Journal* of 1797 various audience responses are recorded to Haldane's preaching. These include negative responses such as 'carelessness and indifference'.¹⁹⁸ More frequently, however, the reports are of 'attentiveness' sometimes 'deep and fixed' as the people are 'affected' by the preaching.¹⁹⁹ Mrs McNeil's personal testimony with respect to Haldane's preaching at Wick in 1797 states:

My father heard with deep attention. As for myself, I was completely riveted; my eyes could see nothing but Mr Haldane, and my ears no sound but his voice.²⁰⁰

Similar positive reports are also given of later tours.²⁰¹ To be sure, such responses can be attributed to the message and its spiritual effect. Cleghorn, in 1803, reports that the 'effects of the word' on the occasion of Haldane's visit to Wick in 1797, were recalled by some as being likened to an 'electric shock'.²⁰² Be this as it may, he acknowledges that the impact was found not simply in the nature of the message but in the 'manner of delivering it'.²⁰³ As Mrs McNeil's comment indicates, it was Haldane that was seen and his voice which was heard. Haldane's persona, therefore, as the young, romantic, sincere, passionate sea Captain, was an important feature in the success of his open-air preaching.

4.9.2. Attracting Attention

Another feature of the preaching performance of Haldane and his associates was some readiness to use novel means of publicity and presentation in order to gather an

¹⁹⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 270.

¹⁹⁸ Haldane, *Journal*, 47.

¹⁹⁹ Haldane, *Journal*, 86.

²⁰⁰ McNeil letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 169.

²⁰¹ Haldane, *Lives*, e.g., 242, 248, 259, 272, 290, and 554.

²⁰² Cleghorn, 'Wick in Caithness', 409.

²⁰³ Cleghorn, 'Wick in Caithness', 410.

audience and gain a hearing for their message. Chief among these theatrics was intimating sermons by use of the town drum or hand bell. These would generally be used for conveying other official information. Their use would involve the hiring of the drummer or ringer. Along with preaching in the open air *per se* this was something that some 'pious people' objected to on the grounds of 'offence'.²⁰⁴ In some instances the use of such methods was either refused to the preachers or the participating announcer punished by town officials.²⁰⁵ This demonstrates the unusual nature of the practice in association with preaching. On the other hand, its novelty achieved its purpose in attracting those who might otherwise not attend church.²⁰⁶ Other ways of attracting attention, announcing that the missionaries were in town, and publicising that a sermon would take place, included the handing out of religious pamphlets. Again there was novelty in this practice. The first time religious tracts appear to have been handed out in any mass way in Scotland was by Charles Simeon in 1796.²⁰⁷ Haldane witnessed this practice both with Simeon and then on the 1797 tour to promote Sunday Schools that he undertook with Campbell.²⁰⁸ Carrying, sending ahead, and distributing such literature became part of his strategy.²⁰⁹ It was somewhat controversial because it was behaviour that could be associated with political activity and sedition particularly in the light of the French Revolution.²¹⁰ Controversial, it was an 'inducement' to gathering.²¹¹ In order to address the suspicions that could be associated with the practice, however, Haldane explained the practice and included an example of such literature in the later edition of his *Journal*.²¹²

²⁰⁴ Haldane, *Journal*, 29-30.

²⁰⁵ In Aberdeen the drummer was fined for announcing a sermon and James Haldane paid the fine, James Haldane's account of the proceedings at Aberdeen contained in Haldane, *Lives*, 151; at Elgin they were refused permission to use the bell-man, Haldane, *Journal*, 47.

²⁰⁶ Haldane, *Journal*, 30.

²⁰⁷ Haldane, *Lives*, 135.

²⁰⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, 135-136.

²⁰⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 145-146. Campbell comments on the way in which in 1800 crowds were attracted both by the drama and novelty of who they were and through the distribution of literature, cited Haldane, *Lives*, 258.

²¹⁰ Campbell recounts that during his trip with James Haldane in 1797 to promote Sunday Schools, three men, who turned out to be ministers, rejected their tracts as they thought that they might be political, Campbell, cited Philip, *Campbell*, 129-130. Extract also given in Haldane, *Lives*, 136-137.

²¹¹ Haldane, *Journal*, 45.

²¹² Haldane, *Journal*, 36.

Haldane and his associates also used certain acts associated with worship in order to gather an audience and gain a hearing for their message. Their usual practice in open-air preaching was to open with the singing of a Psalm, a prayer, and then give a Scripture text. These are acts associated with gathered congregational worship and would be recognised as such by any potential audience. Yet, they were acts that were given a novel turn, occurring in places not generally used for worship and led by those who were not ordained ministers. At Elgin, singing was certainly used to encourage the passers-by to stop.²¹³ In St Andrews it is Haldane's prayer that is said to have attracted people to listen.²¹⁴ With respect to the giving of a Scripture text, Haldane argued that this was simply to demonstrate that everything they said was founded on the Scriptures.²¹⁵ Ironically, however, this practice simply highlighted the controversy and perhaps the novelty of the event. Haldane was not licensed to preach. It was suggested that if he had just spoken without a text that would have been acceptable but by taking a text he was wrongly asserting his right to preach against church order.²¹⁶ While, therefore, Haldane used practices of singing, praying, and reading Scripture, in his hands and in the open air context they functioned differently and contributed to the novelty of the open-air preaching events rather than reinforcing conventional congregational gathering. Be this as it may, an interesting comment is made in the *Journal* about the participation of listeners. It is stated that generally none would join them in the singing at the beginning but more would do so at the end.²¹⁷ This at least indicates something of the transformative impact of the preaching event upon the nature of the audience gathered.

In terms of other theatrics there is not much evidence that Haldane used exaggerated gesticulation in his open-air preaching. Such behaviour was something that brought criticism upon 'Methodist' types of open-air preachers from whom Haldane and his

²¹³ Haldane, *Journal*, 39.

²¹⁴ Haldane, *Lives*, 272.

²¹⁵ Haldane, *Journal*, 22.

²¹⁶ Haldane, *Journal*, 22-23. That Haldane and the other lay preachers should not use a text was an argument made by other Evangelicals, *Haldane*, *Lives*, 181.

²¹⁷ Haldane, *Journal*, 44.

colleagues appear to have wished to distance themselves.²¹⁸ Part of the difficulty is that there are few actual description of Haldane's preaching in terms of his stance and movement. His preaching, however, may not have been without visual impact in terms of gesture. It is reported by an unnamed source that in Kintyre following his release from prison, Haldane 'spoke with an eloquence, a fervour, an animation, which seemed to have acquired redoubled force from the circumstances in which he had been placed'.²¹⁹ There is also an interesting comment made in the reminiscences of a Rev. John Mill that suggests Haldane was not beyond some of the actions associated with Methodist field-preachers such as thumping the Bible or that which it was resting upon.²²⁰ Mill was a minister in Shetland when Haldane visited in 1799. On hearing him preach, Mill criticised the misrepresentation of him in the recently issued 'Pastoral Admonition'. He accordingly allowed Haldane to preach in his church. While he was preaching, Mill reports, he struck the book-board with such a blow as to break one of the brackets. Mill also reports that he did not get it fixed in memory of the visit by the great evangelist.²²¹ While this is a reference to in-church preaching it indicates that Haldane could be animated bodily in his preaching gestures even if this is not a feature of his preaching performance regularly commented upon.

4.9.3. The Skill of Haldane's Open-Air Preaching

Part of James Haldane's preaching performance was the power and persuasiveness of his persona. He was also prepared to use certain theatrics to gather an audience and gain a hearing. In addition to this, Haldane demonstrated some further particular

²¹⁸ *Naked Thoughts on Some of the Peculiarities of the Field Preaching Clergy: In a Letter to a Friend: By a Member of the Church of England* (London: J. Pridden, 1776). While this relates to the situation in England it is an interesting article in that it is concerned with criticisms related to the manner of field-preachers.

²¹⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 264.

²²⁰ *Naked Thoughts*, 2. Thumping the Bible in the open air or the cushion in the church are two of four mannerisms that this critic ridicules.

²²¹ John Willcock, *A Shetland Minister of the Eighteenth Century being Passages in the Life of the Reverend John Mill* (Lerwick: T & T Manson, 1898), 127.

skills in relation to his open-air preaching that were an important part of the success of his preaching performance.

One of Haldane's open-air preaching skills was his use of voice. Preaching outdoors particularly to large crowds and against other noise requires a sufficient volume to be heard. This puts extra physical demands on a preacher. Robert Haldane's voice proved somewhat inadequate in this respect.²²² James Haldane would also suffer at times from the demands put on his voice through constant and excessive preaching in the varying weather of the open air.²²³ As already stated, he retired from preaching in the open air some twenty years before he stopped preaching altogether because of the strain it put on his voice.²²⁴ Generally, however, he proved remarkably physically able to meet the punishing preaching schedule of his outdoor activities. Such activities required him not only to preach often but in doing so to raise his voice.²²⁵ Haldane's voice is frequently described as 'powerful'.²²⁶ While suggesting volume, this description goes beyond this. It indicates the ability of his voice to carry authority. As such, it helped convey something of his 'commanding' presence.²²⁷ This is important because more is required of an open-air preacher than a loud voice unless it is simply to denigrate into shouting. There is the necessity for it yet to be able to carry mood and tone and emphasis. In this respect, it is said that Haldane's voice had 'strength' and 'compass' and that he was able to 'vary its notes' in such a way as could convey 'much solemnity and emphasis'.²²⁸ This was a feature that helped him 'arrest the attention' of his listeners.²²⁹ In addition, it was 'clear' and 'sonorous' suggesting a quality and a richness to his diction and presentation that

²²² Dr Innes account cited Haldane, *Lives*, 276.

²²³ Haldane, *Lives*, 243.

²²⁴ Haldane, *Lives*, 553.

²²⁵ James Haldane cited Haldane, *Lives*, 149.

²²⁶ E.g. Haldane, *Lives*, 174, 553; Grant cited Haldane, *Lives*, 321.

²²⁷ Watson letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 187, Dr Lindsay Alexander funeral oration cited Haldane, *Lives*, 269, Grant cited Haldane, *Lives*, 321.

²²⁸ Haldane, *Lives*, 276.

²²⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 276. Also Haldane, *Lives*, 174, for cited confirmatory witness from Mr Rate, Haldane's companion on the 1797 tour, to the attention gaining strength and compass of James Haldane's voice.

was appealing.²³⁰ Haldane had the ability to address large crowds. It would appear quite inadequate, however, to simply say that he shouted at them. Rather, it would appear that he had the ability at a suitable volume to communicate effectively through variety of tone, feeling, and sentiment, suitable to the seriousness of his subject matter.

Another feature of Haldane's preaching was its rhetorical directness. This directness involved simplicity in expression and pointed application. Wallace writes of Haldane's preaching, 'His direct and simple statements, easily understood, went forcibly home to the hearts of his hearers'.²³¹ Philip writes that Campbell often described Haldane's sermons as 'striking' and that as such gained the attention of the people.²³² Likewise, Haldane's biographer attributes in part the interest and appeal of his open-air preaching to the 'direct' manner of his address.²³³ If Haldane's open-air preaching style made a wider contribution to the preaching of the time it was in this area of its 'pointed manner'.²³⁴ This does not mean, however, that it lacked rhetorical features. Haldane clearly utilised repetition to drive home his point and apply it to various people groups in his audience.²³⁵ The effectiveness of this approach in the open air is indicated in Mrs Morison's recollections of his preaching at Banff. Some fifty years later she could not remember the text but she could remember his 'frequent and pointed repetition of the words, "*Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish*"'.²³⁶

In addition to his use of voice and directness of speech another feature of Haldane's skill was his improvisational ability. The necessary implication based upon the frequency and nature of Haldane's open-air preaching is that it was extempore. This

²³⁰ Haldane, *Lives*, 553.

²³¹ Wallace, *James*, 159.

²³² Philip, *Campbell*, 355.

²³³ Haldane, *Lives*, 270.

²³⁴ Dr Russell of Dundee suggested that 'A more pointed manner of preaching was adopted by many' as a result of the evangelical movement associated with the Haldanes, cited Haldane, *Lives*, 327.

²³⁵ Morison letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 153-154.

²³⁶ Morison letter cited Haldane, *Lives*, 153.

does not mean without thought. Rather, Haldane's open-air preaching involved improvisation on gospel themes in relation to scriptural texts and locational contexts. This is demonstrated, not least, in his listening to and then preaching, sometimes immediately, in response to the sermons of other ministers. He could also respond to current issues of the day even although his preaching was not explicitly political. Thus when he went to Forfar he used his preaching, 'to warn them against Paine's Age of Reason, which we understood had been circulated amongst them'.²³⁷ He could also extemporise in relation to the performing space in which he found himself. Thus Mr Campbell reports of the 1800 tour:

At Portpatrick, Mr. Haldane preached at the bottom of a stupendous rock at the north-west side of the town. The waves were rolling mountains high about a hundred yards below us. The scene was solemn. Mr. H. made many allusions to the troubled sea. The people were very attentive.²³⁸

Similarly at St Andrews it is indicated that in his preaching he would have made much of the historical connections in relation to the Reformation history of the town.²³⁹ That his biographer suggests that this was likely implies that such creative response to situations was a regular feature of his preaching.

In his assessment of Haldane's preaching Wallace writes that, 'There is perhaps not much of what is usually called eloquence in his preaching; he seldom rose into the realm of the artistic'.²⁴⁰ What is artistic in the open air and in a building, however are two different matters. In the open air Haldane's preaching was artistic in that he applied skills, some creative that were suited to the context of the outdoors. The ability at volume to convey mood and tone, directness and repetition in presentation, extemporary improvisation, these are the arts of the open-air performer. In these Haldane demonstrated himself adept.

²³⁷ Haldane, *Journal*, 40.

²³⁸ Campbell cited Haldane, *Lives*, 259.

²³⁹ Haldane, *Lives*, 272

²⁴⁰ Wallace, *James*, 303.

4.10. Conclusions

The information available on James Haldane's open-air preaching is varied and disparate. There is no open-air preaching text available for analysis and no definitive account but rather varied narratives, recollections, reactions, and response. As I have applied the concept of radical street performance to this material, I have shown it to be an integrative, constructive, and illuminating approach. It allows analysis of the preaching event to happen. This is the case even although there are clearly areas of limitation such as the sparse information on Haldane's gestures. This demonstrates the applicability of the approach to the practice of open-air preaching. Subsequently, through analysing Haldane's open-air preaching as radical street performance several conclusions about his preaching can be drawn.

First, the open-air preaching particularly of Haldane but also of his associates was central to the wider evangelical movement in Scotland with which he is associated. It was not just a peripheral activity. On the one hand this was on account of its success in drawing audiences and making an impression. On the other hand, it was the success of this practice pioneered and promoted by Haldane that simultaneously galvanised supporters, generated wider activity, and stimulated opposition. Where opposed it led to fracture. Where welcomed it generated new relationships and associations. It is also at least interesting to note, that the decline in the intensity of Haldane's open-air preaching corresponded with more attention to matters of church polity, which led ultimately in 1808 to the break up of the Independent evangelical consensus which it had generated.

Second, it was the event in its totality that was important. Haldane clearly had skills in preaching outdoors. The attraction and the significance of his preaching, however, were not simply a matter of 'what' was said or even 'how' it was said. The socio-religious backdrop, the immediate open-air location, the persona of the preacher, what he looked like and the way in which he was dressed, the negative as well as the positive reactions all formed part of the drama. Consequently, at times no more theatre was required to make an impression than to have the young, courageous,

Captain Haldane, ride on his horse into the crowd, with his powdered hair and blue coat, ready to preach.

Third, and following on from the above, Haldane's open-air preaching was novel. Scotland was a largely religious country. People were familiar with the genre of the sermon. Haldane, however, provided them with a different kind of performance. The difference was not primarily created by intentional theatrics, although as with the ringing of the hand bell to announce the arrival of the preachers, there were some. Rather, the novelty was created through the offering of a sermon, with a direct evangelistic gospel appeal, in an irregular location, by a young, non-ordained, aristocratic, former sea Captain, who was unafraid to directly contest other authorities.

Fourth, the socio-religious context in which Haldane preached, gave the event of his performance a particular socially dramatic nature which was to his advantage. Haldane was an aristocrat. The radical of his gospel message was individualistically evangelical and socially conservative. In going to the open air, however, with this message, he directly contested status quo ideas, conventions, powers, and authorities, particularly as represented in the Established Church. The practice of contesting the teaching of ministers in their own parishes, a feature of the first tour, was an unambiguous challenge and probably established his reputation even although the practice was later abandoned. Against the backdrop of social change and the French Revolution, this gave his preaching a socio-political dimension as an act of cultural intervention. This was to his advantage, allowing him to be simultaneously conservative, controversial, and popular.

Fifth, Haldane's background, character, experience, skills, person, and personality suited him to the practice of open-air preaching. The journeys undertaken were intense and physically demanding, not least in the Scottish environment. Haldane was physically able and experienced in such challenges of travel and proved himself, generally able to speak regularly in the open air environment. In terms of the performance, however, he also brought to the practice a sense of adventure, romanticism, and passionate sincerity, which was an important feature in the

impression he made. Whether perceived as the arrogance of privilege or the courage of the preacher, his aristocratic background provided him with confidence and determination. It also ensured the necessary finances to undertake such extended preaching tours.

Finally, it was open-air preaching as an irregular practice of the church that made the impression and created the controversy. In defending the practice of open-air preaching Haldane and others, such as Ewing, appealed not least to the scriptural nature of the practice. They denied they were challenging established church order. This said in order to try and bring about church reform, they engaged in and promoted an activity which was not regular church practice. It was this irregularity that created interest and appeal, as well as arousing opposition and controversy. Through this dynamic, the preaching resulted in both intended and transcendent radical outcomes of transformation.

Chapter 5: George MacLeod's Open-Air Preaching as Radical Street Performance

'I was born a symbolist and not an expositor. And such a message as I get across requires "pictures"' (George F. MacLeod).¹

5.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, I analyse James Haldane's open-air preaching as radical street performance. This demonstrates, with reference to a detailed case study of open-air preaching, the applicability of radical street performance as an analytical approach. It also highlights particular features of Haldane's open-air preaching in performance terms. In this chapter, I now apply the concept of radical street performance to the open-air preaching of George Fielden MacLeod (1895-1991). In this way I demonstrate the versatility of the approach beyond the example so far discussed. I also accentuate some of the specific qualities of MacLeod's open-air preaching as radical street performance. I chose MacLeod specifically as the second case study. He provides another example of open-air preaching which occurred in Scotland. In addition, while there are some similarities with Haldane, in other respects MacLeod's open-air preaching is quite different. This is not least the case with respect to some of the content and the style of his open-air preaching.

5.2. Sources and Methodology

The essential methodological strategy is to analyse George MacLeod's open-air preaching as radical street performance with reference to 'the radical', 'the streets', and 'performance'. The sources available for MacLeod's open-air preaching,

¹ Letter of George MacLeod to J. Pitt Watson, 22nd June 1949, 'MacLeod of Fuinary and Iona Community', National Library of Scotland, acc9084/209.

however, are frequently scant in reference and detail. In order to analyse MacLeod's open-air preaching, therefore, I had to draw upon a number of sources to construct an understanding of the nature of this preaching.

One significant albeit secondary source for information about MacLeod is the comprehensive biography, *George MacLeod: Founder of the Iona Community*, written by Ron Ferguson.² This is the only comprehensive biography of MacLeod. It was authorised and written while MacLeod was still alive. Ferguson, a one time Church of Scotland Minister and a former leader of the Iona Community, is a MacLeod family friend. The strengths of this work are nearness to the subject, access to primary sources, and personal recollections. The danger is that the work may lack objectivity. Aware of the danger Ferguson sought to offer a 'critical biography'.³ With respect to my research this work has two main weaknesses. First, although important, there are only very limited descriptions and discussion of MacLeod's open-air preaching. Second, the book has very few references to sources. I have treated the biography as a reliable source in its own right. Wherever possible, however, I have sought to find more primary, additional, and supporting references to Ferguson's descriptions of MacLeod's open-air preaching.⁴

Moving behind Ferguson for source material on MacLeod and his open-air preaching is possible. One consequence of Ferguson's work is that primary sources were gathered and submitted to the National Library of Scotland.⁵ Since the publication of Ferguson's book, additional material has been added. Although indexed, the content of many individual boxes is unsorted and undated. These include many sermon and prayer scripts. The index classifications, the specific dates if given, and the content of this material, however, indicate that these sermons and prayers were used in

² Ron Ferguson, *George MacLeod: Founder of the Iona Community* (London: Harper Collins, 1990).

³ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, xi.

⁴ Other secondary sources I have found helpful: T. Ralph Morton, *What is the Iona Community?* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1957), *The Iona Community* (Edinburgh: St Andrew Press, 1977); Ron Ferguson, *Chasing the Wild Goose* (Collins, 1988), *Love Your Crooked Neighbour* (Edinburgh: St Andrew Press, 1999).

⁵ 'MacLeod of Fuinary and Iona Community', National Library of Scotland, accession list 9084, hereafter, acc9084.

worship services. The actual context for the delivery of other material is unclear. Consequently, I have been unable to identify with any certainty anything that could be said to be the script for an open-air sermon. The archives, however, do contain important material including correspondence, photographs, articles, and notes that contribute directly and indirectly to an understanding of MacLeod's open-air preaching.

MacLeod's own published writings are another primary source. Published sermons give a general impression of preaching style and variety.⁶ His Warrack lectures on preaching, delivered in 1936 and published as *Speaking the Truth in Love*, are particularly helpful.⁷ In these lectures, MacLeod gives his own theoretical and theological understanding of preaching. He applies some of this directly to preaching in an open-air context.⁸ Other published material contains some description by MacLeod of the open-air preaching that took place in Govan.⁹ These writings also place his open-air preaching within the wider context of MacLeod's theological understanding of the church, its worship, its mission, its responsibility to engage with social and political ideas, and the central role which he attributes to the parish congregation.¹⁰ Another source for MacLeod's own writings is the Iona Community publication *The Coracle*, the first edition of which was published in 1938.¹¹ MacLeod provided much of its content in the early years. Both from these years and beyond, *The Coracle* gives useful information about the Iona Community, its mainland missions, and MacLeod himself.

⁶ George F. MacLeod, *Govan Calling* (London: Methuen, 1934), *Four Men and Our Faith: Five Addresses Broadcast from Iona Abbey, August 1953* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1953).

⁷ George F. MacLeod, *Speaking the Truth - In Love* (London: SCM, 1936).

⁸ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 65-66.

⁹ George F. MacLeod, *Are Not the Churchless Millions Partly the Church's Fault?* (Edinburgh: Morrison and Gibb, 1936), *We Shall Rebuild* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1944).

¹⁰ In addition to the above see also George F. MacLeod, 'Evangelism: A New Experiment', *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 10:3 (1955), 11-17, and *Only One Way Left* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1956) for a broader development of earlier ideas.

¹¹ *Rebuilding the Common Life: Foundation Documents of the Iona Community* (Glasgow: Wild Goose, 1988).

Archive film material makes available insights into the Govan of the 1930s and the nature of MacLeod's ministry through the Pearce Institute, the Iona Community, and Community House.¹² In these films, MacLeod himself recounts some of the information found in Ferguson's book. In terms of other source material, the *Govan Old Parish Church Magazine* records important primary information with respect to the 'Week of Friendship' in Govan in 1934.¹³ It was a week in which open-air preaching played a central role. National newspapers supply further general information with occasional but helpful reports on MacLeod's open-air preaching.¹⁴ The local newspapers, *The Govan Press* and *The Clydebank Press*, provide brief but crucial accounts of some of the content of MacLeod's open-air preaching, particularly in Govan in 1937 and in Clydebank in 1941.¹⁵

During the research, I contacted several past and present leaders and staff members of the Iona Community, and former ministers of Govan Old Parish Church.¹⁶ This confirmed the scarcity of source material beyond that already indicated. Anne Muir has recently completed an oral history of the early years of the Iona Community.¹⁷ Open-air preaching, however, did not feature in her work. I explored other possibilities of finding people who had heard MacLeod preach in the open air. Through conversations, it is my understanding that there is now no one in the Govan Old congregation who was present while MacLeod was minister there.¹⁸ A letter published in *Life and Work* magazine in August 2008 indicating the nature of my

¹² *Alf Goes to Work*, Dir, Robert Newman, National Council of Churches, USA. 1960; *Can These Stones Live?*, Dir, Vernon Sproxton, BBC Television. 1964; *Iona Club*, ABC Television. 1950s; *Sermon in Stone*. 1966.

¹³ These are kept at Govan Old Parish Church. I also consulted the *Kirk Session Minutes* for the relevant period but they offered little.

¹⁴ The most useful national newspapers were *The Glasgow Herald* and *The Scotsman*.

¹⁵ I read all the editions of *The Govan Press* between 1930 and 1938. The paper was generally positive but not uncritical of MacLeod. A weakness of this material is that different articles were written by different unidentified journalists. The paper did, however, provide information about MacLeod's activities, popular perceptions of him, and the local context in which he ministered.

¹⁶ These included Ron Ferguson, John Harvey, John Bell, and Kathy Galloway.

¹⁷ Anne Muir, 'The Early Years' http://www.iona.org.uk/Oral_History/The_Early_Years.php, accessed 1/2/09. Any material I use from excerpts of this research as provided by Anne Muir will be cited as *OH Iona* and used with permission.

¹⁸ The Govan Old Parish Church congregation became part of Govan and Linthouse Parish Church in October 2007.

research and requesting help resulted in no useable information.¹⁹ I did, however, make contact with several older Church of Scotland ministers who were able to provide me with useful information. One of these, Andrew Queen Morton, remembered hearing MacLeod preach in the open air sometime late in the 1930s.²⁰ In addition, I made contact with a number of the early members of the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.²¹ A few of these remembered hearing MacLeod speak at open-air events in the late 1950s and early 1960s.²² The distance between the events and the various recollections given mean that details were often unclear although the impressions helpful.

I use this diverse material to discover occasions when MacLeod preached outdoors. I then narrow the focus to open-air preaching that specifically sought audiences beyond those who would normally attend church. In this way, I identify several examples of missional open-air preaching in which MacLeod participated or actively planned and promoted. These are the primary examples used for analysis. In reconstruction and analysis I seek whenever possible to have collaborating sources.

5.3. Biographical Sketch

George Fielden MacLeod (1895-1991) is described by Duncan Forrester in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* as ‘among the most flamboyant and charismatic Scottish church leaders of the twentieth century, and possibly the most

¹⁹ ‘MacLeod Memories?’, *Life and Work*, (August 2008), 7-8.

²⁰ Andrew Queen Morton, telephone interviews with author 31/1/09 and 2/2/09.

²¹ Hereafter, SCND. That MacLeod’s speaking at SCND events is something that should be regarded as open-air preaching is something I justify and defend later. The archive material for the early years of the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, hereafter SCND, is very slight and some appears to have been lost. There is a small collection at The Mitchell Library in Glasgow, ‘Scottish CND Archives, 1956-60’, SR. 181 TOC. Included in this archive is correspondence which indicates that MacLeod was invited to speak at an open-air meeting organised by SCND in Aberdeen on the 19th September 1959. I was unable, however, to find any further record of that event. Nothing was mentioned in *The Press and Journal* about such an event. This area of MacLeod’s involvement with SCND, however, is one that invites further specific research.

²² These included Marion Blythman, Janey Buchan, and Ian Davison, some of whose comments will be included later.

influential'.²³ Born into an aristocratic background he had the benefits of such in his upbringing and education. Following distinguished service in the First World War he undertook theological education and was ordained as a Church of Scotland minister in 1924.²⁴ In some ways this vocational choice was unsurprising. In the words of his biographer Ferguson, MacLeod belonged to 'one of Britain's most formidable ecclesiastical dynasties'.²⁵ It was not simply that the MacLeod house had given 'more than 550 years of ordained service to the Church' but that in doing so the ministers had frequently achieved prominence and recognition in church and society.²⁶ In 1938, following ministry with the Talbot House (Toc H) organisation and churches in Edinburgh and Govan, MacLeod founded the Iona Community. This is widely regarded as his greatest and lasting contribution to the church.²⁷ It was primarily for this work that in 1989, three years before his death, he received the prestigious Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion.²⁸ Ferguson says this award was 'regarded as the Nobel Prize for Religion' and 'merely confirmed George MacLeod's stature as one of the outstanding international Christians of the twentieth century'.²⁹

As indicated above, MacLeod's activities received recognition. He was awarded several honorary doctorate degrees, the first of these from Glasgow University in 1937. In 1955, he was appointed as 'Chaplain to the Queen'. In 1957, he became Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland. In 1967, already a Baron, he was given a life peerage and so became 'Lord MacLeod of Fuinary'. In 1987, he was presented with the Union Medal from Union Theological Seminary, New York. MacLeod, however, also provoked considerable controversy. This was in part due to the controversial nature of the causes he promoted including renewal in

²³ Duncan B. Forrester, 'MacLeod, George Fielden Baron MacLeod of Fuinary (1895-1991)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 35 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 804-808, 804.

²⁴ Serving with the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders he was awarded the Military Cross (1917) and a Croix de Guerre with palm (1918).

²⁵ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 3,

²⁶ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 3.

²⁷ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 416-417. The Church of Scotland publication, *Life and Work* described Iona as his 'signal achievement', 'George MacLeod', (August 1991), 28.

²⁸ Phyllis Rodgers Pleasants, 'He was Ancientfuture before Ancientfuture was Cool', *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, 31:1 (2004), 83-97, 84.

²⁹ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 415.

worship, ecumenical relations, political and social activism, and from the 1930s onwards, pacifism. The opposition he provoked was also a result of his determined manner which has been described as ‘arrogant enthusiasm’.³⁰ Ferguson in his memorial tribute to MacLeod described him as the ‘Gunslinging Gambler from Govan’ who perhaps never understood ‘the number of sniper rifles trained on him from dilapidated buildings’.³¹ In a poignant reflection upon the award of the Templeton Prize to his father, Maxwell MacLeod captures something of the controversially determined nature of MacLeod:

What makes this award utterly appropriate to the man is that it is not given for conventional behaviour. It is not given to loyal servants of the Church, to bureaucrats or even to honour great learning. No, this award is given to specifically honour anguished souls who act because they must in order to sleep at nights. To trouble-makers who have turned over tables screaming blue murder. To intellectual vandals who break moulds with unwise words. To shockers who refuse to let us turn on the television and forget our ghastly world. It is given to the Solzenitzyns, the Dalai Lamas, to the George MacLeods.³²

To analyse the open-air preaching of George MacLeod, therefore, is to consider the practice of a major twentieth century figure in Scottish church history, indeed, ‘one most likely to demand a mention in the history of the world Church’.³³ The stature of MacLeod may in itself challenge stereotypical perceptions with respect to the nature of those who preach in the open air.

5.4. George MacLeod’s In-Church Preaching

MacLeod was recognised through his ministry as one of the greatest preachers of his time. On his appointment to St Cuthbert’s Church in Edinburgh in 1926, *The Glasgow Herald* stated, ‘Mr MacLeod has in exceptional degree the persuasive gifts of the men of his family, who made the name of MacLeod in past generations a household word in Scotland’.³⁴ Summarising MacLeod’s time at St Cuthbert’s, Ferguson writes, ‘George MacLeod, with his aristocratic bearing, commanding

³⁰ Commentary, *Can These Stones Live* (1964).

³¹ Ferguson, ‘The Gunslinging Gambler of Govan’, *Love Your*, 46-55, 49.

³² Maxwell MacLeod, ‘Father’s Day’, *Coracle* (Spring 1990), 14-16, 16.

³³ R.D. Kernohan, ‘MacLeod at Eighty’, *Life and Work* (June 1975), 19.

³⁴ ‘St Cuthbert’s’, *Glasgow Herald*, 13th February, 1926, 11.

presence, charisma and passionate conviction, quickly became known as one of the outstanding young preachers in Scotland.³⁵ Years later in 1985, on the occasion of the celebration of his ninetieth birthday, some still considered him ‘the Kirk’s best preacher, propagandist and controversialist’.³⁶

There are many indications of MacLeod’s gifts as a preacher. Large congregations gathered to hear him.³⁷ He was a popular broadcast preacher.³⁸ Published copies of his broadcast sermons were in demand. In 1936 he was invited to deliver the Warrack Lectures on preaching, the first non-Anglican to do so.³⁹ Consequently he was the first Presbyterian since the 17th century to be Select Preacher at Cambridge and occupy pulpits at St Paul’s Cathedral and Eton College.⁴⁰ Throughout his life he was invited to preach throughout the world.

The most familiar setting for MacLeod’s preaching was within the context of a congregation gathered in worship. Within this context MacLeod could combine his skills as a preacher with those as a worship leader. He understood the potential impact of a complete worship service in its order, rhythm, symbolism, and movement.⁴¹ He understood its ‘theatre’.⁴² He had a grasp of the practicalities required to make a worship service function as an act of witness.⁴³ In worship MacLeod could also combine his mastery of words in preaching with his mastery of

³⁵ Ferguson, *Chasing*, 56.

³⁶ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 409.

³⁷ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 81.

³⁸ Material on MacLeod as a broadcaster is found in Ronnie Falconner, *The Kilt Beneath My Cassock* (Edinburgh: Handel Press, 1978).

³⁹ These were published as George F. MacLeod, *Speaking the Truth in Love* (London: SCM, 1936).

⁴⁰ ‘Dr George F. MacLeod: Nominated as Moderator’, *Glasgow Herald*, 17th October, 1956, 7.

⁴¹ Throughout MacLeod’s life he promoted renewal in worship by drawing on traditions from the past. I do not have the time here to discuss fully the issue of the accuracy of MacLeod’s use of history or the Celtic tradition. See Donald E. Meek, *The Quest for Celtic Christianity* (Millfield: Handsel Press, 2000) for a critique of MacLeod’s representation of the Celtic tradition.

⁴² Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 240-241.

⁴³ ‘Broadcast Services’, *Govan Old Parish Magazine* (December 1930), [unnumbered].

words in prayer.⁴⁴ For some it was the latter that were the most persuasive.⁴⁵

Certainly at Iona, preaching, prayer and the liturgical and locational context could come together in one spiritual experience. The Rev. Douglas Alexander, a member of the community in the early years recalls:

I can still remember the hair bristling on the back of my neck at the sheer power of George MacLeod preaching – yes - but even more so, his leading of prayers. When George took prayer in the Abbey, then the walls of the ancient place shimmered, and, as he, himself, would put it, ‘they glowed red, the colour of blood.’ And worship in the Abbey was, for almost everybody who visited it, an overwhelming experience. There was simply nowhere else in Scotland, at that time, where there was anything to compare with the power, and with the ‘responsible mysticism’ that characterised worship in the Abbey at that time.⁴⁶

Another recollection is offered by O. Ben Sparks from Iona in 1965. He writes of the ‘gravitas’ of the Abbey and the worship:

now presided over by a towering, world-renowned Scottish preacher who, with eloquent, persistent, merciful, generous preaching of the gospel, denounced nuclear weapons, and promoted healing, prayer, social and political action, and the renewal of worship.⁴⁷

Within the context of worship, therefore, MacLeod’s preaching was part of the total performance of the event. It was enacted by one who understood the theatrics of the occasion, their role within it, and who had the abilities to perform it.

5.5. George MacLeod’s Outdoor Preaching

The most familiar setting for George MacLeod’s preaching was among a congregation gathered in worship. Yet, throughout his ministry, there were occasions when he preached at outdoor events. These included a Scout event in Edinburgh,⁴⁸ Remembrance Day services at Govan,⁴⁹ the dedication of outdoor locations,⁵⁰ open-

⁴⁴ George F. MacLeod, *The Whole Earth Shall Cry Glory* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1985), for a collection of MacLeod’s prayers.

⁴⁵ T. Ralph Morton, ‘George MacLeod’, *Coracle* (January 1951), 2-7, 3.

⁴⁶ Douglas Alexander on ‘George MacLeod’, *OH Iona*.

⁴⁷ O. Ben Sparks, ‘Ye Gates Lift Up Your Heads on High’, *Journal for Preachers*, 30:2 (2007), 16-21, 17.

⁴⁸ ‘Boy Scout’s Church Parade’, *Scotsman*, 4th July, 1927, 7.

⁴⁹ ‘Their Names Liveth for Evermore’, *Govan Press*, 13th November, 7.

⁵⁰ ‘Govan Garden’s Opened’, *Govan Press*, 19th October, 5.

air pilgrimages and Communion services at Iona,⁵¹ and while Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, even a Covenanters memorial Coventicle.⁵² To be sure, in such circumstances preachers require to adapt to the outdoor locations. Such outdoor events may also attract wider attention. Some of MacLeod's open-air services on Iona were broadcast on television.⁵³ This raises particular questions of the primary intended audience. MacLeod undoubtedly saw the missionary potential of broadcast preaching.⁵⁴ These open-air events which I have described, however, were primarily services of congregational worship held outdoors. As such, I would distinguish them from what I define as missional open-air preaching. This said, as I will demonstrate, on occasions, part of MacLeod's open-air preaching performance involved the deliberate use of religious symbolism.

5. 6. George MacLeod's Missional Open-Air Preaching

In addition to preaching at outdoor worship events, MacLeod also participated in open-air preaching which sought audiences beyond those who attended congregational worship. I identify two primary periods for such preaching. During these periods the preaching was not always of the same intensity and a range of audiences were gathered.

The first main period of MacLeod's missional open air-preaching was while he was the minister at Govan Old Parish Church between 1930 and 1938. MacLeod gives the impression that such preaching was a regular activity.⁵⁵ This supports Ferguson's assertion that MacLeod often preached in the streets of Govan.⁵⁶ In addition,

⁵¹ For an early account of an Iona pilgrimage with outdoor acts, 'Pilgrimage to Iona', *Glasgow Herald*, 10th June, 1939, 12. In 1963 marking the 1400th anniversary of Columba's arrival on Iona there was an open-air Communion Service at which MacLeod presided and preached, Rev. Douglas Alexander, e-mail correspondence with author, 1/2/09.

⁵² 'Covenanter's Example to Christians', *Glasgow Herald*, 10th July, 1957, 9.

⁵³ Falconner, *Kilt*, 155-160.

⁵⁴ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 80.

⁵⁵ MacLeod, 'George MacLeod', *Scottish Field* (July 1959), 25-27 and 65, 27, also MacLeod cited in Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

⁵⁶ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 131.

Ferguson states that at the time of writing his book, the memory of MacLeod's open-air preaching was still strong there.⁵⁷ Open-air preaching also clearly featured in two special campaigns which MacLeod orchestrated. The first of these was the 'Week of Friendship' in October 1934. This was the climax of a two year campaign entitled a 'Message of Friendship'.⁵⁸ The second campaign was a 'Peace Week' in 1937 at which open-air preaching was a main activity.⁵⁹ MacLeod may also have participated in the summer Sunday evening open-air preaching organised by the fraternal of Ibrox and Govan ministers in 1937.⁶⁰ It is also likely, not least since he was the local area co-ordinator, that he took part in preaching midweek at the shipyard gates in Govan as part of the 1938 Church of Scotland's 'Recall to Religion' campaign.⁶¹ While he was minister at Govan Old, MacLeod definitely preached in the open air at Troon in 1936. This was part of the Church of Scotland's Summer Mission Campaign.⁶² For Maxwell MacLeod, at least, the Govan ministry was a period which could be symbolised by an image of his father, once the soldier now the minister with a dog collar, standing 'on a soap box at Govan Cross yelling hoarsely against the rain'.⁶³ MacLeod's preaching during this period, with particular reference to the 'Week of Friendship' and the 'Peace Week', form an important part of the analysis of his preaching as radical street performance.

The second main period of MacLeod's open-air preaching is that which occurred from 1938 to the early 1960s. This was open-air preaching that MacLeod promoted and participated in as leader of the Iona Community. The most significant of this preaching took place in Clydebank following the blitz in 1941 as part of a 'United

⁵⁷ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 131. Here Ferguson quotes from Sir Alex Ferguson the present manager of Manchester United who was raised in Govan as 'One of those brought up on the MacLeod legend'. It is necessary to note that what Alex Ferguson comments on is the 'legend'. He was not born when George MacLeod was minister at Govan Old, although it is possible that he heard him preach in the open air at a later period. Confirmed in telephone conversation with Sir Alex, 6/3/08.

⁵⁸ MacLeod, *Are*, 16-24.

⁵⁹ 'Peace Week in Govan: Assemblies at New Govan Cross', *Govan Press*, 5th November 1937, 1.

⁶⁰ 'Round the Churches', *Govan Press*, 4th June, 1937, 8.

⁶¹ 'The "Recall to Religion" in Govan', *Govan Press*, 25th February, 1938, 4.

⁶² James F. Simpson, 'The Church in the Open', *Life and Work*, (October 1936), 388.

⁶³ MacLeod, 'Father's', 14.

Witness'.⁶⁴ This witness was instigated and planned by MacLeod.⁶⁵ It was 'one of the first such ecumenical ventures in Britain'.⁶⁶ It involved the Church of Scotland, the Congregational, the Methodist, and the Episcopal Church in Scotland.⁶⁷ Two Iona members, Bob Craig and Bill Smith, were seconded to the area for the months of June, July, and August 1941.⁶⁸ The open-air preaching that took place in Clydebanks as part of this witness was of various types and on various occasions. The preachers who participated included local ministers, the members of the Iona Community, and as arranged by MacLeod visits from Dr John White and Archbishop William Temple. A photograph in the *Evening Times*, accompanying the report, 'Street-Corner Meeting Questions for Dr Temple', shows large crowds of workers gathering around the car from which Temple spoke with MacLeod and White present.⁶⁹ MacLeod himself spoke at open-air meetings in Clydebanks between the 8th and 10th of August 1941.⁷⁰ Open-air preaching as part of the united witness in some form or another, with various participants, appears to have stretched from July 1941 through to some time in the following year.⁷¹

During the late 1930s to the early 1960s, MacLeod participated in other open-air preaching. He preached in the open air as part of a student mission week in November 1941.⁷² In the mid 1940s, he preached in the streets of Glasgow following short street theatre productions staged from the back of a lorry. This was

⁶⁴ In reference to the effects of the German bombing of Clydebanks in March 1941 Ferguson states that, 'only seven houses out of 12,000 escaped damage. 528 people were killed, and 35,000 were made homeless. Before the blitz there were 16 reformed churches in the town: two days later, nine were still standing', *MacLeod*, 187.

⁶⁵ For MacLeod's proposal for this scheme and related correspondence see acc9084/180. For a more accessible account 'About It and About', *Coracle* (October 1941), 26-29.

⁶⁶ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 188.

⁶⁷ 'Clydebanks Churches' United Witness', *Clydebanks Press*, 11th July, 1941, 3.

⁶⁸ For their account, Bob Craig and Bill Smith, 'Looking Back We Want to Say', *Coracle* (October 1941), 20-21.

⁶⁹ 'Street-Corner Meeting Questions for Dr Temple', *Evening Times*, 19th September, 1941, 8.

⁷⁰ 'Visit of Rev. George F. MacLeod to Clydebanks', *Clydebanks Press*, 8th August, 1941, 1.

⁷¹ Correspondence between MacLeod and the Rev. John White indicates that by the end of 1942 this experiment had ended, acc9084/180.

⁷² Stuart L. Harris, 'The Apostolic Preaching - To-Day', *Coracle*, (June 1941), 18-21, 19.

carried out under the auspices of the Iona Community Youth Trust.⁷³ In the 1950s MacLeod indicates that he also preached in Govan again as part of the 'Tell Scotland Campaign'.⁷⁴ MacLeod famously disagreed with the decision of the 'Tell Scotland' organisers to invite Billy Graham as part of their activities. His objections were both theological and strategic.⁷⁵ Other aspects of the 'Tell Scotland' campaign, however, including open-air preaching as a strategy of parish mission, resonated with his own interests and concerns.⁷⁶ Later in the 1950s and indeed beyond this there was also MacLeod's open-air preaching as associated with SCND.⁷⁷ I would justify the claim that this speaking at SCND events can be regarded as preaching on two grounds. First, insofar as MacLeod spoke on socio-political issues on the basis of his biblically informed Christian convictions, this falls within the definition of preaching given in chapter 1 of this thesis. Second, it is speaking that falls within MacLeod's own understanding of what constitutes preaching.⁷⁸

MacLeod's open-air preaching, therefore, took place primarily between the early 1930s and the early 1960s. In this period, according to the sources consulted, the earlier years of 1930 to 1941 were when his open-air preaching was most prolific. The preaching in this period will thus form the basis for the analysis of his preaching in terms of the radical, the streets, and performance. On its own, however, these examples would still give an incomplete picture. Material relating to the later expressions of his open-air preaching, therefore, up till the early 1960s will also be used.

⁷³ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 239.

⁷⁴ MacLeod, 'George', 27.

⁷⁵ Letter from George MacLeod to the General Committee, 28th April, 1954, acc9084/254.

⁷⁶ Tom Allan, *The Congregational Group in Action* (Glasgow: Tell Scotland, 1955), 17-18.

⁷⁷ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 316.

⁷⁸ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 50-71.

5.7. Seeking Change and Being Changed

MacLeod sought to bring about change through his open-air preaching. In terms of radical street performance this was his radical intent. Each event may have had a specific purpose. In analysing his open-air preaching with reference to the radical, however, I identify three main transformational purposes. These were, to encourage individual salvation, social transformation, and church reform. In these purposes he achieved some success. Interestingly, however, an incident recorded by MacLeod about open-air preaching also highlights the potential of the democratic nature of open-air preaching to transcend the radical intent of the preacher and to change the performer.

5.7.1. Transformative Goals

One of the things that MacLeod wished to achieve through his open-air preaching was to reach some of the ‘churchless millions’ with the message of salvation.⁷⁹ People had to be warned about the danger of missing ‘the wonderful promise of Christ - the promise of more Abundant Life: The promise of Everlasting Life’.⁸⁰ The Christian Gospel was the only means by which ‘individual and personal...disorders’ might be righted.⁸¹ For MacLeod, ‘the appeal of the Gospel must ever be individual’.⁸² From early, however, it is clear that for MacLeod individual salvation cannot be separated from a person’s material and social existence and well being. To do so would be to go against the Lordship of Christ over all things, the demonstrated compassion of Christ, and his revelatory incarnate nature.⁸³ It would be to accept the

⁷⁹ MacLeod, *Are*, 11-15.

⁸⁰ Statements from ‘The Card left on each House in Week Prior to Mission’, in Govan in 1934, MacLeod, *Are*, Appendix [unnumbered].

⁸¹ Invitation Card sent out in connection with the Clydebank mission, acc9084/180.

⁸² MacLeod, *We*, 11.

⁸³ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 50-71.

argument of the Communist, condemn politics to the secular, and wrongly read the Bible.⁸⁴

Following on from the above, a second transformative purpose of MacLeod's open-air preaching was to bring about social change. This is demonstrated in the range of the topics he covered. He debated with Communists at Govan Cross.⁸⁵ From the same spot he argued for pacifism in 1937.⁸⁶ At Clydebank in 1941 MacLeod and others preached on and discussed a broad range of socio-political issues from their Christian perspective.⁸⁷ The concern to involve people actively with religion and local politics seems to have been a significant motive of the travelling street theatre and associated open-air preaching of the mid 1940s. It was a 'propaganda' expression of the desire to combine through drama, 'discussion, study, and action'.⁸⁸ MacLeod compared it to political practices in Germany in the 1930s where after a short play a speaker would engage the audience in discussion.⁸⁹ MacLeod's involvement with SCND can also be associated with this transformative goal of changing society.

A third transformative purpose of Macleod's open-air preaching was to reform the mission life of the Church of Scotland. Open-air preaching played a twice daily part in the 'Week of Friendship' at Govan in 1934.⁹⁰ This was the climax to a two year congregational mission. Through this mission, MacLeod wished to reform the life of Govan Old Parish Church by involving the congregation in activities that should be a normal part of its life.⁹¹ As he would later explain, this was necessary because the

⁸⁴ MacLeod, *Only*, 23-38.

⁸⁵ MacLeod, 'George', 25.

⁸⁶ 'Peace Pledge Union Meetings', *Glasgow Herald*, 9th November, 1937, 4.

⁸⁷ For the contribution of MacLeod see, 'Rev. Dr MacLeod Talks', *Clydebank Press*, 3, for that of guest preacher Rev. G. S. Duncan, 'Tragic Features of Modern Life', *Glasgow Herald*, 19th September, 1941, 4.

⁸⁸ Morton, *Iona*, 71-74.

⁸⁹ MacLeod, untitled address [n.d.], acc9084/122.

⁹⁰ I will describe and discuss the details of this preaching more fully later in the chapter.

⁹¹ MacLeod, *Are*, 17.

‘churchless millions’ were not simply ‘partly’ but ‘largely’ the Church’s fault.⁹² Christendom was over. The Reformation construction had collapsed. Traditional revivals were unlikely.⁹³ The parish system was failing. Congregations were not concentrating on their local area.⁹⁴ The answer, according to MacLeod, was for congregations to engage in parish missions as they did at Govan.⁹⁵ There is no evidence he thought that open-air preaching was an essential practice for every congregational mission everywhere.⁹⁶ Be this as it may, he clearly considered it an important participative practice for the congregational mission at Govan. He also stated that open-air preaching should form part of the ‘United Witness’ at Clydebank in 1941.⁹⁷ Through participating in such preaching, the churches could show themselves united by acting in unity. For MacLeod, therefore, engagement in open-air preaching was an expression of the church becoming the church that it should be. In this way, in addition to a concern for individual salvation and social transformation, MacLeod wanted to reform the life of the church through open-air preaching.

5.7.2. The Success of George MacLeod’s Open-Air Preaching

One measure of the success of open-air preaching is its ability to gather an audience. MacLeod indicates that on occasions, his weekday open-air preaching at Govan could attract between 400 and 500 people.⁹⁸ During the ‘Week of Friendship’ in 1934, he claims that the preaching stances regularly gathered between 200 and 300 listeners, with 1500 on the last night.⁹⁹ The meetings during ‘Peace Week’ in 1937

⁹² MacLeod, *Are*, 24.

⁹³ MacLeod, *We*, 7-9, 94-96.

⁹⁴ MacLeod, *Are*, 7-15, *We*, 99-104.

⁹⁵ MacLeod, *Are*, 16-24, *We*, 105-111.

⁹⁶ The information in the archives on other parish missions that MacLeod promoted give little or no indication that open-air preaching was an important part of their programme, see acc9084/347

⁹⁷ MacLeod, ‘Proposed Co-operation’ [unnumbered], acc9084/180.

⁹⁸ MacLeod, ‘George’, 27, MacLeod cited Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

⁹⁹ MacLeod, ‘The Message of Friendship’, *Govan Old Parish Magazine* (November 1934), [unnumbered].

are reported in *The Govan Press*, as ‘well attended each evening’.¹⁰⁰ The open air meetings in Clydebank, particularly mid-week, regularly attracted upwards of a hundred to several hundred listeners.¹⁰¹ The Sunday night meetings in Clydebank, however, were not always as successful. They did not always draw large numbers, nor did they necessarily attract the non-churched people whom it was hoped that they would reach.¹⁰² Bob Craig in a letter to MacLeod dated the 14th July 1941 complains that the first Sunday night open-air meeting was a ‘flop’ because ‘only churchy people turned out’.¹⁰³ Ferguson suggests a large audience for the street preaching that accompanied the street drama in the 1940s.¹⁰⁴ Morton, however, indicates that such events were difficult to stage and that after the drama was over, it could be hard for the preacher to keep the audience.¹⁰⁵ Events associated with SCND in the late 1950s and 1960s could gather crowds of several hundred to several thousand people.¹⁰⁶ Even there, however, speakers might have to work to keep an audience.¹⁰⁷ In terms of numbers, therefore, particularly at Govan and at Clydebank, MacLeod’s open-air preaching was generally able to gather a sizeable audience. The composition of audiences varied according to location and event. The preaching to the unemployed at Govan and outside factory gates at Clydebank attracted audiences mainly of men.¹⁰⁸ Preaching in the streets where people lived gained more captive and presumably more varied audiences.¹⁰⁹ Beyond the live audiences, as indicated by the

¹⁰⁰ ‘Peace Week in Govan: Open-Air Meetings Well Attended’, *Govan Press*, 12th November, 1937, 5.

¹⁰¹ MacLeod, ‘Memo on Clydebank as at Oct. 1941’, [unnumbered], acc9084/180, ‘The Position in Clydebank’ [unnumbered], acc9084/180. The report by Craig and Smith indicated audiences of 350-400, ‘Looking Back’, 20-21.

¹⁰² ‘Clydebank Churches’ Scheme’, *Clydebank Press*, 18th July, 1941, 3, states that the first Sunday night open-air meeting was ‘not largely attended’.

¹⁰³ Bob Craig, letter to MacLeod, 14th July 1941, acc9084/180.

¹⁰⁴ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 239.

¹⁰⁵ T. Ralph Morton, *Evangelism in Scotland* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1954), 50.

¹⁰⁶ ‘Polaris Protest by Greenock Council’, *Glasgow Herald*, 18th November, 1960, 7, ‘New Actors in Old Glasgow Custom’, *Glasgow Herald*, 20th February, 1961, 7. I have no evidence that MacLeod spoke at either of these events but use them as illustrative of attendance numbers at such activities in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

¹⁰⁷ Marion Blythman said that she and her companions who had participated in the events did not always stop to listen to the speakers, interview with author 31/1/09.

¹⁰⁸ This is illustrated by the pictures used on the back cover of *We Shall Rebuild* which featured listeners at Clydebank.

¹⁰⁹ MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

sources being used, some of these occasions were reported in the press. Audiences, however, were not guaranteed.

Numbers aside, where evidence exists, MacLeod achieved some success in terms of his radical intents. With respect to individual salvation the statistics associated with the 'Message of Friendship', during which open-air preaching played a central part, are impressive. MacLeod reports, 'eighty people coming forward for adult Baptism' and 'two hundred and twenty people' signing up 'for a ten week's course towards full membership'.¹¹⁰ In addition to these, one hundred people came forward with old church membership lines and two hundred children joined the Sunday School. MacLeod admits that such success was beyond their expectations.¹¹¹

The success of MacLeod's open-air preaching in terms of bringing about social transformation is harder to quantify. This is not something unique to MacLeod's open-air preaching. It is a difficulty associated with all radical performances that have as their goal the transformation of society.¹¹² This limitation of the analytical approach should be recognised. It can, however, be argued that MacLeod's preaching contributed in some way to the 'spirit of the times'.¹¹³ His words and actions on socio-political issues mean that at very least, a position that may otherwise have been absent was borne witness to. Witness as showing that which may otherwise remain hidden is a recognisable form of radical street performance.¹¹⁴ In addition it was a witness that at times provoked reaction. Morton certainly claims that even when people did not agree with MacLeod, he 'showed them something new' and gave them 'something to argue about, something to oppose, something to follow'.¹¹⁵ That some people followed is possible. The open-air preaching of 'Peace Week' in 1937

¹¹⁰ MacLeod, *Are*, 23-24.

¹¹¹ MacLeod, *Are*, 24.

¹¹² Kershaw states that measuring the long term effects that any performance has on an audience is 'notoriously difficult to determine', *Politics*, 21.

¹¹³ Early members of SCND responded to the question 'What did we change?' by suggesting that they positively influenced 'the spirit of the times', 'What Did We change? The Spirit of the Times', *Scotsman*, 15th February, 2008, 20-21.

¹¹⁴ Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 65-66

¹¹⁵ Morton, *Iona*, 22

was accompanied by opportunities for people to get literature and sign a peace pledge.¹¹⁶ There are no indications as to the numbers who did but it would seem fair to assume that some did.¹¹⁷ In so far as they in turn began to act differently, MacLeod's open-air preaching, albeit indirectly, can be regarded as bringing about socio-political change.¹¹⁸ Various, thus, through the fact of the event of witness, the provocation that it generated, and the life-style changes it inspired, MacLeod's open-air preaching can be regarded as bringing about socio-political change.

In terms of church reform the church at Govan was transformed through its participation in the congregational mission in which open-air preaching played an important part. To some extent this can be related to the arrival of new converts and increased numbers. The transformation, however, went beyond this. It was the transformation that came to the congregation through preparation and participation in the mission activities. Significantly, when MacLeod reported on the success of the mission in 1934, he highlighted first the changes that were brought to the life of the congregation prior to anything else that 'happened'.¹¹⁹ The Rev Hugh Douglas, who became an assistant at Govan Old Parish Church in 1934, wrote this about the campaign:

The whole experience made a profound impression on me. I began to find a fellowship in the Church deeper and more real than anything I had known before. The thought of mission by the Church to the out-side world became an exciting reality instead of a dim possibility.¹²⁰

The congregation at Govan was thus reformed and revitalised in its own congregational life even as it engaged in its mission activities. Some success in church reform was also apparent at Clydebank. For there the open-air preaching brought together and presented the church as united in a time of crisis. While it lasted, it was this demonstrated united witness that gave the church and its message

¹¹⁶ 'Peace Week in Govan: Assemblies at New Govan Cross', 1.

¹¹⁷ No further information on this event is available in the archives of the Peace Pledge Union, archivist e-mail correspondence with author, 3/2/09.

¹¹⁸ This would appear to be in keeping at least in part with Kershaw's understanding of the efficacy of performance as articulated in *Politics*, 21-29.

¹¹⁹ MacLeod, *We*, 109.

¹²⁰ Hugh Douglas, unpublished recollections [unnumbered], viewed by author 29/4/08, property of Molly Harvey, Glasgow.

credibility again among the workers to whom the preaching was directed.¹²¹ This credibility among the working people was the very goal that MacLeod had for church reform. In Clydebank, however, this success only lasted for a short time. It is also the case that while open-air preaching played an important part in Govan and Clydebank it was not the only activity which the congregation prepared for and participated in. Success, therefore, can only be partially attributed to its practice.

MacLeod's open-air preaching was broad in its radical intent. It was mixed in its success. This can be attributed in part to its breadth. In turn such preaching carries no guarantees. Sometimes the fact that the event has been staged is the success, is the witness, because without it this particular position and perspective would remain silent and unnoticed. On the other hand, at times the outcomes could exceed expectations. With reference to this idea of the radical, transcending the intent of the performer, MacLeod tells an interesting story.

5.7.3. The Story of Archie Gray

The story of Archie Gray is worth particular attention in terms of analysing MacLeod's open-air preaching as radical street performance.¹²² It relates to MacLeod's regular street preaching in Govan. The incident is undated. The conditions described, however, and the particular nature of MacLeod's message, suggest the early 1930s. MacLeod told several versions.¹²³ The possible hyperbole of the preacher has to be recognised. Common elements, however, occur and suggest a significant street incident.¹²⁴ The following version is the short account:

After preaching on one occasion a young man made a very bitter protest from the crowd. He was down at heel but he was very clear of eye. He asked why the Church had forgotten about men's bodies, all this stuff about pies in the sky

¹²¹ MacLeod, 'Memo on Clydebank, [unnumbered], acc9084/180, Craig and Smith, 'Looking Back', 21.

¹²² Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

¹²³ For a longer version that indicates the particular reasons why this man was starving, Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

¹²⁴ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

when you die, what about pies now. His protest was so bitter it broke up the meeting.

About three weeks later I was sent to the local hospital, to see a man who was dying. It turned out to be my bitter questioner, and he was dying of starvation. He said he wanted to see me to tell me why he was so bitter. He said it was not because the Church was talking nonsense. Only the Church was talking the truth, but the Church wasn't serious about it.¹²⁵

Analysed from the perspective of the radical in radical street performance, this event is significant for at least two reasons.

First, this account illustrates the potentially transcendent nature of the radical in street performances. Here it is the performer who is changed. MacLeod comments, 'I realised he was preaching the gospel and not I'.¹²⁶ Gray's words came to MacLeod as though from God through the prophet Isaiah.¹²⁷ The challenge experienced would lead finally to the formation of the Iona Community.¹²⁸ Interestingly, something of a similar transformative experience is apparent in the MacLeod sponsored open-air preaching at Clydebank in 1941. For Craig and Smith, the Iona members seconded there highlight more of what they learned while preaching at the gates of John Brown's shipyards from the workers than what they gave to them.¹²⁹

Second, this account is significant for highlighting the 'democratic' nature of MacLeod's open-air preaching. People by nature of being outside the conventions of church buildings and worship could freely respond. Responses could include heckling and raucous comments.¹³⁰ Gray's question, however, was not an interruption but a participation in 'question time'.¹³¹ MacLeod encouraged this in one form of his open-air preaching. It was an approach that he used both at Govan and at Clydebank. With respect to the latter he said that crowds were larger and more

¹²⁵ My transcript from MacLeod speaking in film *Alf Goes to Work*, National council of Churches, USA, 1960.

¹²⁶ MacLeod cited Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

¹²⁷ MacLeod cited Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

¹²⁸ MacLeod cited Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

¹²⁹ Craig and Smith, 'Looking Back', 20-21.

¹³⁰ 'Round About Govan', *Govan Press*, 12th November, 1937, 5.

¹³¹ MacLeod cited Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

intelligent than the much heralded Tower Hill open-air preaching in London.¹³² It is clear that this approach of welcoming and engaging questions was also considered to function outside of the normal convention of congregational worship. This is apparent in the fact that during the ‘Week of Friendship’ when there was a question time in the Pearce Institute after the evening service it was known as ‘Street-Predaching Under Cover’.¹³³ That the encounter with Gray actually took place not at an in-building question time but in the streets should be noted. For as already suggested the freedom to participate in the streets existed prior to permission and was greater than any which would normally occur at an in-building activity.

MacLeod sought to bring change through his open-air preaching. This was the radical of his performance. So understood there was a breadth to his intent and a variety of success. In some forms of his open-air preaching MacLeod also practised a democratic style that enabled the audience to become participants in a context where responsive freedom already existed. In such a context the radical could transcend the intent of the performer to create something new.

5.8. Contesting the Dichotomy between the Spiritual and the Political

In radical street performance, the ‘streets’ represent a physical place where events occur. Conceptually, however, they are also a space where ideological contest takes place. When MacLeod’s open-air preaching is analysed according to the ‘streets’, I ascertain a number of features. First, MacLeod, like many other missional open-air preachers went to the streets to gain access to public audiences beyond those who were gathering in worship. For MacLeod, however, this was not only obedience to an evangelistic command. It was also an incarnational act of embodied presence. Second, MacLeod exploited the practical and symbolic significance of certain locations. Third, in entering the streets he entered a space where ideas and ideologies were frequently contested through oratory. Among the two most important types of

¹³² MacLeod, ‘Memo on Clydebank, [unnumbered], acc9084/180.

¹³³ MacLeod, ‘Message’ [unnumbered].

such oratory competing for peoples attention were the religious and the political. I argue, therefore, that a primary feature of MacLeod's street preaching was to contest the dichotomy that existed between them.

5.8.1. Going to the 'Market Place'

MacLeod saw preaching in the streets as a way of reaching those who otherwise were not coming to church. Describing the situation he found on his arrival in Govan in 1930 he states, 'The people of Govan weren't coming to the Church. So we went out and began preaching in the street'.¹³⁴ The missional impulse that took MacLeod to the streets was related to the command of Christ and subsequent missionary pioneers. In a sermon preached on the 14th December 1941 in relation to an Iona supported mission he declared:

from the beginning of time until now our religion has always been one of Movement. 'Go' was the great commission of Jesus to His disciples. And ever since, whether through the journey's of St Paul, or the Celtic mission to Scotland, or the travelling friars, or the Covenanters, or the ministry of Wesley, the significant days of the Church had been days of Movement.¹³⁵

Elsewhere, with particular reference to open-air preaching, he again made specific comparison with the example of Celtic missionaries.¹³⁶ MacLeod's open-air preaching in its missional intent, therefore, was motivated by the commission of Christ, earlier mission examples, and that of Celtic forebears in particular.

This mission activity, however, was rooted in what for MacLeod was a central doctrine, the doctrine of the incarnation.¹³⁷ It was this doctrine that required preachers to go to people in the totality of their material and social existence. Thus he writes:

¹³⁴ My transcript from MacLeod speaking in film *Alf Goes to Work*, National council of Churches, USA, 1960.

¹³⁵ Reported in, *St. John's Kirk Chronicle*, (January 1942), [unnumbered], acc9084/59.

¹³⁶ Untitled address given by MacLeod to City Business Club, probably from 1941, explaining the Clydebank mission [n.d.], acc9084/124.

¹³⁷ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 406.

the essence of our Lord's coming was to start with men where men dwell.
Instead of visiting the earth in all the panoply of power He humbled himself, was
content to be born in a stable and to die on a Cross, if by any means he might
save some.¹³⁸

For MacLeod, the 'market place' was a favourite parabolic description to represent the reality of people's lives.¹³⁹ In turn, the 'Cross' which first represented Christ's incarnational sacrifice, came to refer to the embodied witness of the church. Thus what MacLeod wanted to do, as expressed in one of MacLeod's famous sayings, was to raise again the Cross 'at the centre of the marketplace' for it was there in the midst of life not in church sanctuary that Christ lived and was crucified.¹⁴⁰ Consequently, for MacLeod, therefore, preaching in the streets can be regarded as part of the church physically incarnating itself in the 'market-place' of the world, out-with the safety of church boundaries.¹⁴¹ It was about 'speaking the truth in love' in the face of the 'forces' that were competing for people's attention.¹⁴² It was about engaging in this activity in the actual location where people lived and worked.

5.8.2. The Practical and Symbolic Use of Space

MacLeod had practical reasons for preaching in the streets. One particular reason why he expected to find people present in the streets of Govan was the high unemployment figures in the early 1930s. This meant that many people were idle and had little else to do.¹⁴³ On other occasions he would deliberately choose places where people would already be present. In Govan, this included the streets overlooked by people's homes.¹⁴⁴ At Clydebank, it meant holding meetings outside of the shipyard

¹³⁸ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 56-57

¹³⁹ MacLeod, *We*, 11-19.

¹⁴⁰ MacLeod, *Only*, 37.

¹⁴¹ A short sermon delivered at the dedication of a replica Celtic Cross at Govan Cross in November 1937 brilliantly expresses a number of these themes, 'Sermon Text', acc9084/572.

¹⁴² MacLeod, *Speaking*, 63-64.

¹⁴³ MacLeod, cited Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

¹⁴⁴ MacLeod, *We*, 23.

gates at lunchtime.¹⁴⁵ At Edinburgh University, it was the ‘balustrades of the Quads’.¹⁴⁶

In addition to the practical use of space MacLeod, however, also understood the symbolic meaning of preaching in particular places. Govan Cross was the established centre of Govan. It was frequently used as a meeting place for all sorts of activities and events. It was also the ancient Christian centre of the area. MacLeod had a replica Celtic Cross erected there in 1937.¹⁴⁷ The next day, he launched his ‘Peace Week’ open-air campaign from that spot.¹⁴⁸ To go to Clydebank and later to sites in Glasgow where there was bomb damage was to deliberately embody the presence of the church in places facing crises and distress.¹⁴⁹ The locations chosen by MacLeod, therefore, were at times important not simply in their practical but in their symbolic significance as he sought to gather an audience and gain a hearing.

5.8.3. Beyond Separation

In terms of MacLeod’s open-air preaching being an act of ideological contest, this can be related to the other street activities and performances occurring at the time. This is exemplified particularly with reference to his preaching at Govan which places MacLeod’s open-air preaching, his ability to gather an audience, and the particular content of his open-air preaching in context. *The Govan Press* for the years 1930-1938 indicates that the streets of Govan were the stage for a large range of commercial, entertainment, political, social, and religious performances. The way in which street events could attract an audience in Govan is captured humorously in the reported comment from a visitor who:

¹⁴⁵ ‘Rev. Dr.’, 3.

¹⁴⁶ Harris, ‘Apostolic’, 19

¹⁴⁷ ‘The Cross of Govan’, *Govan Old Parish Magazine* (October, 1937), [unnumbered].

¹⁴⁸ ‘Peace Week in Govan: Open-Air Meetings Well Attended’, 5.

¹⁴⁹ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 188, 239.

alleged that he never saw a place where even the most humble funerals seemed to exercise such fascination as a street spectacle. He avers that a hearse and one coach seem suffice as a communal signal in Govan for a general rally.¹⁵⁰

Much of what happened in the streets of Govan used street oratory to attract attention. On one occasion a person selling 'cosmetic novelties' was even compared to an open-air preacher.¹⁵¹

Among the main activities that took place in the streets and used street oratory were those with religious and political commitments. This is typified in MacLeod's comment that the unemployed had nothing to do but listen to 'curate or Communist'.¹⁵² The Govan of the 1930s, therefore, was familiar with open-air preaching. In the past there had been some notable open-air preachers in this district. These included Rev. Robert Howie who was known as 'Brimstone Bob' and Adjutant Harry Munn from the Salvation Army who used a wide range of theatrical devices in order to gather a crowd and gain a hearing.¹⁵³ The nostalgic looking back to such personalities and other comments made in the local press indicate, however, that by the 1930s the 'glory days' of open-air preaching was passing if not passed. On the one hand, there were complaints that the churches were not making as effective use of such preaching as they once had.¹⁵⁴ On the other hand, there were complaints about the disturbance that open-air religious activities could cause.¹⁵⁵ Be this as it may, open-air preaching was still a recognised and regular practice in 1930s Govan. It was carried out by various individual church and para-church groups.¹⁵⁶ There was a local united churches 'Govan Open-Air Mission', to promote the practice as a regular evangelistic activity.¹⁵⁷ At least some of these open-air meetings

¹⁵⁰ 'Round and About Govan', *Govan Press*, 7th April 1933, 7.

¹⁵¹ 'Round and About Govan', *Govan Press*, 9th December, 1932, 7.

¹⁵² Macleod, cited *Ferguson*, 138.

¹⁵³ For information about Howie, 'Diamond Jubilee Celebrations', *Govan Press*, 31st March, 1933, 4, and for Munn, 'An Unconventional Salvationist' *Govan Press*, 23rd February, 1934, 4.

¹⁵⁴ 'Is the Church Drifting', *Govan Press*, 29th January, 1932, 4, 'Random Jottings', *Govan Press*, 11th November, 1932, 4, 'Church Chat', *Govan Press*, 6th July, 1934, 8.

¹⁵⁵ 'Church Chat', *Govan Press*, 23rd July, 1933, 5, 'Letters to the Editor', *Govan Press*, 26th April, 1935, 5.

¹⁵⁶ Baptists, Methodists, Church of Scotland, the Salvation Army, Mission Halls, the Temperance Society, the Bible Publicity Open-Air Crusade are reported as taking part in open-air activities in period 1930-38.

¹⁵⁷ 'Church Chat', *Govan Press*, 17th August, 1934, 6.

attracted reasonable audiences.¹⁵⁸ Some expressions were directly related to special evangelistic events.¹⁵⁹ Indeed, much of the religious open-air preaching that took place had as its concern evangelism, with a spiritual emphasis on the necessity of personal salvation.¹⁶⁰ Open-air preaching, therefore, was a regular and familiar practice in Govan in the 1930s.

If religious meetings and open-air preaching were familiar on the streets of Govan in the 1930s, so were political meetings. Various political interests, causes, and parties, with their own street orators, through meeting, procession, and protest performed in the streets.¹⁶¹ While men were the predominant gender involved in these gatherings this was not always the case.¹⁶² Times such as municipal elections saw an increase in open-air activities.¹⁶³ The freedom to hold such meetings, however, was by no means guaranteed. Meetings could be stopped and participants arrested. The legal basis for this was the Glasgow Police Act of 1866.¹⁶⁴ Despite these regulations, meetings concerned with socio-political issues were a familiar part of Govan street life in the 1930s. MacLeod particularly mentions the activity of the Communists.¹⁶⁵ In turn he specifically names Peter McIntyre as a Communist street protagonist.¹⁶⁶ The reports in *The Govan Press* confirm that McIntyre was a 'well known' street orator in the district.¹⁶⁷ He had an ability to gather a crowd. He could present his principles well.¹⁶⁸ He also understood how to exploit the drama of a political moment. On

¹⁵⁸ For example 'Random Jottings', *Govan Press*, 3rd June, 1932, 4, and 'Church Chat', *Govan Press*, 13th July, 1934, 4.

¹⁵⁹ For example, 'Govan Baptist Church', *Govan Press*, 24th June, 1932, 4, 'Straight from the Shoulder' and 'Gospel Tent, Uist Street', *Govan Press*, 30th June, 1933, 4.

¹⁶⁰ 'Straight from', 4.

¹⁶¹ 'The Big Parade', *Govan Press*, 2nd October, 1931, 1, 'Well Behaved Govan', *Govan Press*, 9th October, 1931, 6, 'Unemployed Demonstration', *Govan Press*, 9th October, 1931, 7.

¹⁶² 'Call to Govan Women', *Govan Press*, 20th May, 1932, 9.

¹⁶³ 'News Points and Gossip', *Govan Press*, 4th October, 1935, 4.

¹⁶⁴ For details see *Govan Press*, 19th October, 1931, 6. For a challenge to the implementation of this on the basis of the 1908 Public Meetings Act see 'Peter M'Intyre Objects', *Govan Press*, 20th October, 1933, 6.

¹⁶⁵ Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 138.

¹⁶⁶ MacLeod, 'George MacLeod', 27.

¹⁶⁷ 'Govan Orator Honoured', *Govan Press*, 12th February, 1932, 5.

¹⁶⁸ 'Candidates', *Govan Press*, 1st November, 1935, 5.

Friday 27th May 1932 he was evicted from his house in Govan Road.¹⁶⁹ The following Monday he was at Govan Cross relating his experiences to a large crowd.¹⁷⁰ Where drama was not present, McIntyre could create it through his own theatrics. On one occasion he turned the roof of the tramway shelter at Govan Cross into his stage illuminated by naked flames.¹⁷¹ In addition to religious activity, therefore, political drama and performance were a feature of 1930s Govan street life.

When MacLeod preached in the streets, he physically entered this contest of ideas. It was a contest which he represented as consisting of the spiritual 'curate' on the one hand and the socio-political 'Communist' on the other. The emphasis of his approach was to challenge this very dichotomy. He contested specifically with the ideas of Communism.¹⁷² The reason that he did so, however, was not because he disagreed with the social change it wished to bring but because it denied the importance of the spiritual.¹⁷³ On the other hand, he was as equally opposed to expressions of Christianity that separated the spiritual from the socio-political. He attributed this separation to 'the direct act of the Devil'.¹⁷⁴ For the church not to address this, he argued, was to hand over 'this half broken, half-hopeful, altogether distressed world to the Devil himself who stands waiting through the ages to annexe it'.¹⁷⁵ For MacLeod, therefore, this dichotomy was the primary power to be contested through 'speaking the truth in love'.¹⁷⁶ When MacLeod in the open air contested with Communists on the one hand or preached pacifism as a necessary Christian position on the other, this is ultimately what he was challenging. In the open air at Clydebank he specifically named and addressed the matter. He argued that to separate the spiritual from aspirations of social change was to yank apart the horizontal and the vertical beams of the Cross.¹⁷⁷ Whether MacLeod, therefore, was speaking at church

¹⁶⁹ 'Evicted!', *Govan Press*, 3rd June, 1932, 7.

¹⁷⁰ Picture back page, *Govan Press*, 3rd June, 1932, 12.

¹⁷¹ 'Shelter Roof as Platform', *Govan Press*, 10th November, 1933, 5.

¹⁷² MacLeod, 'George MacLeod', 27.

¹⁷³ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 65-66.

¹⁷⁴ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 52.

¹⁷⁵ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 55.

¹⁷⁶ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 64.

¹⁷⁷ 'Rev. Dr.', 3.

sponsored or politically sponsored events such as SCND activities, he was challenging through his understanding of salvation, concerns, and content, what he saw to be the destructive separation between the socio-political and the spiritual. This is what is implicit in Ian Davison's comments about MacLeod's contribution to SCND events when he says, 'he had a special Christian emphasis'.¹⁷⁸ In a context where neither open-air preaching nor political speeches were unfamiliar, MacLeod contested the divorce created by the exclusive interests of each from the perspective of the gospel.

Street preaching throughout the period of this investigation appears to have been on the decline. It was not, however, novel. In 1930s Govan, where much of MacLeod's open-air preaching took place, it was a regular activity as familiar as political street oratory. In going to the streets, MacLeod physically and conceptually entered the space of conflict. He did so seeking to incarnate physically an expression of the Word incarnate with a concern to hold together the personal and the social, the spiritual and the material, the religious and the political. In so doing at Govan and later, he contested what he regarded as the destructive forces of separation.

5.9. The Showman Symbolist

The 'performance' in radical street performance can describe the whole event. Under this heading, however, I will give particular attention to the expressive nature of MacLeod's open-air preaching. In so doing I will highlight through my analysis, his style and skills, his persona, and his explicit use of religious symbolism in the staging of certain open-air preaching events.

¹⁷⁸ Ian Davison, e-mail correspondence with author, 2/1/09.

5.9.1. Style and Skills

To connect with an audience's ideology can be considered a necessary approach of any performance that hopes to change that audience.¹⁷⁹ In his open-air preaching MacLeod started where people 'were at'.¹⁸⁰ This was no mere homiletical technique to get to the real issue of personal salvation. It came from his incarnational understanding of salvation and the gospel. It did, however, have homiletical significance. For it meant starting sympathetically with people's real concerns. This could create solidarity of shared popular interest. At Govan, he was remembered as speaking for the 'aspirations and desires' of working people.¹⁸¹ Even when he was contesting with Communists at street corners his approach was to start with agreement and admiration.¹⁸² At times, however, the common ground was not popularity or agreement but relevance. Thus he was not afraid to deal with controversial but real issues. Consequently, in 1937 he preached pacifism at Govan Cross even as many of the formerly unemployed were now employed in rearmament programmes. MacLeod, therefore, started with people's real issues and whether or not what he said was popular it was relevant to the lives of people. Morton argues that it was in this way, rather than through simplifying his vocabulary, that MacLeod spoke in the language of the people.¹⁸³

MacLeod's approach of starting on common ground with those to whom he was preaching was given particularly interesting expression during the 'Week of Friendship', in 1937. The word 'Friendship' indicated the nature of the offer of God in Christ.¹⁸⁴ It also, however, indicated the attitude in which the 'mission' was carried out. MacLeod said that they proceeded on the basis that people were not 'lost souls but primarily unshepherded'.¹⁸⁵ This was not their fault but the church's fault.

¹⁷⁹ Kershaw, *Politics*, 21.

¹⁸⁰ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 57.

¹⁸¹ Sir Alex Ferguson, cited Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 131-132.

¹⁸² MacLeod, *Speaking*, 65-66.

¹⁸³ Morton, *Iona*, 13.

¹⁸⁴ MacLeod, *We*, 107.

¹⁸⁵ MacLeod, *Are*, 17

They were thus invited to ‘return’ to their own congregation if they had one or that of the parish church if not.¹⁸⁶ On this whole approach MacLeod states, ‘Such success as attended our witness was, we believe in no small sense due to this consistent attitude’.¹⁸⁷

It can be argued that the above examples were culturally specific. The issues that MacLeod spoke on were directly relevant to his day and time. In turn the appeal of the ‘Week of Friendship’ required a context within which the church and particularly the Church of Scotland still had cultural capital and people had a familiarity with sermons as a recognised genre of communication. This is not denied.¹⁸⁸ It was something that MacLeod in his own terms of reference was aware of and deliberately sought to appeal to.¹⁸⁹ The general point, however, is precisely that within his cultural context, his open-air preaching had a relevance and appeal, because it started sympathetically with where people were, in terms of life issues and their relationship to the church.

If part of MacLeod’s style was to start on the common ground of where people were, he also had preaching skills that were suited to the open air. He had a voice loud enough to be heard. He understood, however, as demonstrated at Clydebank, that if you speak quieter, you can draw in a crowd and save your voice.¹⁹⁰ This skill he attributed to advice given by the Communist protagonist McIntyre, after a street debate. On that occasion, McIntyre advised MacLeod only to speak loud enough so that the second last row could hear. This would cause those behind them, to push the crowd in closer.¹⁹¹ Control of tone, allowed him to come across ‘friendly, but

¹⁸⁶ MacLeod, *Are*, 23

¹⁸⁷ MacLeod, *Are*, 17-18.

¹⁸⁸ That this was so would be in keeping with the views of Callum Brown with respect to the ongoing significance of Christianity and religion in Britain and Scotland during this period, *The Death of Christian Britain* (London: Routledge, 2001), *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Pearson: London, 2006).

¹⁸⁹ MacLeod spoke about people not being convinced ‘secularists’ and still waiting upon the Church, *We*, 96.

¹⁹⁰ ‘Clydebank Cameos’, *Clydebank Press*, 15th August, 1941, 3.

¹⁹¹ MacLeod, ‘George MacLeod’, 27.

authoritative and formal'.¹⁹² To communicate, he could speak clearly and directly. He could make a logical argument such as when during 'Peace Week' he argued that the previous war had not delivered peoples aspirations.¹⁹³ He could also use image and picture to capture his claims as with the picture of the dismembered Cross at Clydebank.¹⁹⁴ Andrew Queen Morton recalls hearing MacLeod preach in the open air sometime in the late 1930s. He says that you might disagree with MacLeod but that you 'understood what he was getting at'. This was because he argued and illustrated. He also recalled that MacLeod's gesticulations were few but that his language was dramatic and that he could hold a crowd in the open air.¹⁹⁵

MacLeod could also improvise in the open air, as message, style, and outdoor context coalesced in the event of preaching. The report of his open-air preaching at Govan Cross on the Monday night of 'Peace Week' illustrates this well. While he was preaching war planes flew overhead. In response he commented that 'the whole Pacifist problem was that they could not be heard for the noise of armament making'. Then looking upwards towards a plane flying away he used the contrast between its green and red lights. He argued that people were happy to re-arm because they thought it was for defence, thus taking danger away but that really it was bringing the danger towards them.¹⁹⁶ This creative ability was important when heckling and questioning were features of his performances.¹⁹⁷ I found no explicit example of MacLeod offering a witty riposte in the open air. He commented with admiration, however, on others who did.¹⁹⁸ There is no reason to suppose that he did not make such replies. He certainly used humour at Clydebank at Adolf Hitler's expense to gather a crowd and break the ice.¹⁹⁹ In addition, the strength of his ability with language was that in keeping with the occasion, he could capture popular sentiments

¹⁹² Davison, e-mail correspondence with author, 2/1/09.

¹⁹³ 'Peace Pledge Union Meetings', 4.

¹⁹⁴ Andrew Queen Morton, telephone interviews with author, 31/1/09 and 2/2/09.

¹⁹⁵ Morton, interview, 31/1/09 and 2/2/09.

¹⁹⁶ 'Peace Week in Govan: Meetings Well Attended', 5.

¹⁹⁷ 'Round about Govan', *Govan Press*, 12th November, 1937, 5.

¹⁹⁸ MacLeod comments on the witty reply that Dr White made at an open-air meeting, *We*, 52.

¹⁹⁹ 'Clydebank Cameos', 3, 'Rev. Dr.', 3.

in a slogan or phrase.²⁰⁰ One such example was in the late 1950s. Speaking at an open-air SCND gathering he rebuffed the economic promises associated with the locating of nuclear weapons on the Clyde, with the phrase, 'You cannot spend a silver dollar when you are dead'.²⁰¹ This would then be turned by John Mack Smith and Morris Blythman into a popular protest song, 'Ding Dong Dollar' with the line, 'O ye canny spend a dollar when ye're deid'.²⁰²

These matters of style and skill are relevant not simply to preaching in the open air but also for in-church preaching. In the open air, however, where there is no assembled congregation but rather listeners have to be gathered, kept, and in turn a hearing negotiated, they take on a particular degree of importance.

5.9.2. The 'Christian Soldier'

Another important feature that added interest and appeal to MacLeod's open-air performances was his preaching persona. MacLeod preached in the open air as a Church of Scotland minister wearing his clerical collar.²⁰³ In and of itself, in a context where clergy still had a degree of respect, if not status, this may have been enough to attract attention.²⁰⁴ MacLeod, however also brought personal demographic, physical, and psychological aspects to this persona. His aristocratic background and service as a soldier were well publicised. He had an English public school accent which could be described as 'posh'.²⁰⁵ He was handsome. He carried himself with military bearing. Marion Blythman recalls:

He always came over as a sort of militant Christian, I always thought of him in terms of 'Onward Christian Soldiers'. So although he was a pacifist he wasn't a

²⁰⁰ Davison, e-mail correspondence with author, 31/1/09.

²⁰¹ Blythman interview, 31/1/09.

²⁰² *Ding Dong Dollar: Anti-Polaris Songs* (Glasgow: Glasgow Song Guild, [n.d.]), 2.

²⁰³ This is confirmed both by photographs and reminiscences. Photograph of MacLeod probably at 'Week of Friendship', acc9084/464.

²⁰⁴ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 111-112.

²⁰⁵ Blythman, interview, 31/1/09.

kind of quiet, quietly spoken sort of holding his line...I just remember him as being quite up front and in your face...not overbearing but purposeful.²⁰⁶

Together these indicate that his preaching persona carried not simply the status of role but the presence of his personality through it and reinforcing it. MacLeod the open-air preacher, therefore, came across as the courageous active soldier of Christ wearing the uniform of the church.

In addition to the above, in terms of persona, MacLeod was also something of a 'celebrity' Church of Scotland minister.²⁰⁷ At Govan he quickly established himself as a regular and popular radio preacher.²⁰⁸ When in 1936 he participated in the Church of Scotland Summer Mission campaign he attracted one of the largest crowds. I would conjecture that this was at least in part due to his popular status. When it was announced that he was preaching at Clydebank, he was described as 'a well known figure in the district'.²⁰⁹ He may well have been included in the reference to the 'Princes of the Church' that accompanied the comments about Dr Temple preaching in Clydebank.²¹⁰ Certainly by 1941, MacLeod had in addition to his earlier activities, the publicised notoriety of being the founder of the Iona Community and of being a banned broadcast preacher on account of his pacifism.²¹¹ Following the war, his status as a leading character in the Church of Scotland and as a broadcast preacher would be reinforced as his activities were heard, shown, and reported by various media.

There is, however, another aspect of his preaching persona as Church of Scotland minister that requires to be noted. When MacLeod preached in the streets of Govan bringing together the spiritual and the socio-political he did so as one who was demonstrably involved in such activities and the life of his community. In some personal recollections from that period it was not his preaching that was remembered

²⁰⁶ Blythman, interview, 31/1/09.

²⁰⁷ I am not using the term 'celebrity' here in any derogatory way.

²⁰⁸ 'Church Chat', *Govan Press*, 21st July, 1933, 5.

²⁰⁹ 'Clydebank Churches United Witness', *Clydebank Press*, 27th July, 1941, 3.

²¹⁰ 'An Editorial Diary', *Glasgow Herald*, 20th September, 1941, 4.

²¹¹ 'Broadcasting Ban: The Rev. Dr G. F. MacLeod's Support of Pacifism', *Glasgow Herald*, 7th January, 1941, 3.

but what he did on a personal and a pastoral level.²¹² One contemporary report expressed it as follows:

he will always be popular because of his sincere candour, and friendliness. Every day in growing numbers, his parishioners seek advice and guidance on matters which perplex them and he is always at their service.²¹³

When he became Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland *The Govan Press* recalled, ‘Dr. MacLeod worked unceasingly during the “hungry thirties” to help the unemployed’.²¹⁴ MacLeod’s open-air preaching at Govan, therefore, took place within the context of the gospel performed in his own life and in turn in that of a church demonstrating the Christian ethic. This was something he argued in his lectures on preaching was essential.²¹⁵ This context of his open-air preaching embedded in the wider work and activity of a local congregation may above all else explain why Govan probably represented the most successful context of his open-air preaching in terms of achieving his transformational purposes. After he left Govan he carried with him the reputation of what he had achieved. He also became leader of an active community. An important link, however, was broken, between the open-air preacher, the local church congregation, and the wider community in an area.

5.9.3. Religious Theatre

Part of the dramatic nature of MacLeod’s open-air preaching was simply the event itself created by the interaction of his persona, skills, content, and character as he preached in the open air in a variety of contexts. In addition to the drama of the event, however, MacLeod, the ‘showman’ could orchestrate open-air theatrics.²¹⁶ The invitation to Archbishop William Temple to preach at Clydebank was always likely to gain news attention, as well as reinforce the ecumenical nature of the whole

²¹² Ferguson, *MacLeod*, 101-105.

²¹³ ‘Random Jottings’, *Govan Press*, 25th March, 1932, 4.

²¹⁴ ‘The New Moderator’, *Govan Press*, 24th May, 1957, 1.

²¹⁵ MacLeod, *Speaking*, 93-95.

²¹⁶ Ferguson described MacLeod as a ‘showman’, *MacLeod*, 240. Marion Blythman also described MacLeod in this way, interview, 31/1/09.

Clydebank witness. Standing in the rain at the Quads of Edinburgh University offering ‘trailers’ to his evening talks and inviting those present to coffee certainly had a positive impact engaging students in discussion if keeping them from lectures.²¹⁷ Jumping up to speak after a lorry based street theatre production captures the imagination if it did not always capture an audience.

One of the most interesting examples of managed theatrics by MacLeod is to be found in connection with the open-air preaching that took place during the ‘Week of Friendship’ in Govan in 1934. There, MacLeod explicitly made large scale use of religious symbols. The symbols chosen and the meanings given were described by MacLeod at the opening outdoor service of the mission on Monday 22nd October 1934. This took place in the War Memorial Gardens at Govan Cross.²¹⁸ One symbol was a banner carrying the message of friendship with the image of the Old Celtic Cross of Govan on it.²¹⁹ Another was the church’s ‘Parish Bible’ from 1682 which pointed to the time and the principles of the Covenanters.²²⁰ In fact they only carried this Bible with them on procession on the Monday because during the week the rain was such as threatened to damage it.²²¹ A third was ‘a bell similar to that used by the ancient Celtic missionaries to proclaim loudly and unashamedly the coming of the Gospel’.²²² MacLeod would later report that the bell used on the Monday belonged to the Sunday School. They had, however, got no further than the first street corner when someone offered them the use of the old Govan Town Crier’s bell. MacLeod with an appeal to further symbolism reported:

As we rang it one felt its pleasure to be out of a glass case again, and (to make up for all the alarums it had once proclaimed) for a whole week gave tongue to Good News.²²³

²¹⁷ Harris, ‘Apostolic’, 19.

²¹⁸ ‘Govan Church Ceremony: Processions in the Streets’, *Govan Press*, 26th October, 1934, 8.

²¹⁹ MacLeod, ‘Message’ [unnumbered]. This clarifies that they did not actually carry a Cross and a banner as may be implied from a newspaper report but a banner with a Cross on it.

²²⁰ ‘Govan Church’, 8.

²²¹ MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

²²² ‘Govan Church’, 8.

²²³ MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

The fourth symbol was ‘a staff such as Constantine carried in the early days of the Govan religious community’.²²⁴ It offered ‘a ready Sermon on the need for Progress in the Christian Life’,²²⁵ a sermon that the Christian gospel is not understood, unless people are ‘continually progressing and bringing out more people to the church’.²²⁶ Thus as MacLeod explained in his open-air sermon, ‘These various symbols reached beyond the material to a larger, spiritual truth’.²²⁷

With these symbols MacLeod and the others taking part processed into the streets. They stopped at three stages and explained the purpose of the ‘Message of Friendship’. This was the regular afternoon pattern of the week. In this they were accompanied by the sound of church bells being played through loud speakers from the top of the Pearce Institute. This also, according to MacLeod, was no cheap stunt. It was in keeping with their message ‘a symbol of science placed at the service of God’.²²⁸ Something he argued should be contrasted with the use of the same technology at a local dog racing track to blast out a ‘jazz cacophony’.²²⁹

If such orchestrated religious drama was not enough, the evenings followed a slightly different format. Preachers would go out to three stances. They would preach there ‘without questions’.²³⁰ MacLeod accompanied by robed and singing choir boys would then proceed into the streets. They would gather in people from each of these stances. They would then return to the church singing ‘Onward Christian Soldiers’ with the church bells pealing out and calling people to the evening church meetings.²³¹ At these meetings an evangelistic message would be preached and appeal made by the Rev. Robin Scott from Dundee. This would be followed by

²²⁴ ‘Govan Ceremony’, 8.

²²⁵ MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

²²⁶ ‘Govan Church’, 8.

²²⁷ ‘Govan Church’, 8.

²²⁸ ‘Govan Church’, 8.

²²⁹ MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

²³⁰ MacLeod, *Are*, 22. This can be contrasted with the previously discussed approach to open-air preaching.

²³¹ ‘Govan Church’, 8.

‘open-forums’ of questions and answer which were known as ‘Street-Preaching under Cover’.²³²

The climax to these performances of religious procession, symbolism, and preaching was the Friday night. Instead of having an after service open-forum they paraded into the streets to walk around the parish and speak at pre-determined points.²³³ ‘Torch-Bearers’ had been arranged but the weather defeated that plan.²³⁴ Be this as it may they proceeded singing all the way. They stopped at street corners to ask God’s blessing on those who lived there. MacLeod describes the final stance as follows:

and in narrow, overcrowded Hamilton Street, from window and in street some 1500 people must have listened patiently to an appeal that every Christian soul should return to their own place of worship on the Lord’s Day coming and renew their old allegiance, while any Christian who knew no Fellowship should join us in their Parish Church.²³⁵

In a later account he concludes, ‘Denominations seemed to be forgotten as every man bared his head while we prayed together for a final blessing on the whole parish.’²³⁶

In terms of his open-air preaching MacLeod did several things in these events. He dramatically made present the life of the Govan Old congregation in the community. He offered alternative symbols to those of political parties, evangelical gatherings, and Salvation Army parades.²³⁷ Macleod argued that human beings yearn for symbols and that if the church did not offer them people would find them elsewhere.²³⁸ He thus brought word and image together in the theatrics of an oral/visual proclamatory event. He considered this to be a feature of the success of this week. Following the event he wrote:

²³² MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

²³³ MacLeod, *Are*, 22.

²³⁴ MacLeod, *Are*, 22.

²³⁵ MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

²³⁶ MacLeod, *Are*, 23.

²³⁷ Various political groups had their own parades, banners, rituals, and song books. For examples from Govan in the 1930s in addition to film footage see the ‘Tom Anderson Album’, archive material kept at the Mitchell Library in Glasgow, TD51. Tom Andersons was a well known Scottish revolutionary socialist. Interestingly, this archive includes a letter from MacLeod to Anderson.

²³⁸ ‘Govan Church’, 8.

We can afford to smile now at our early doubts as to use symbol in cautious Scotland. In deciding to use it at all, we were determined to use it fully.²³⁹

It seems possible that the decision to stage the final night procession was actually ‘guided’ by the success of the approach and the positive response they received during the week.²⁴⁰ The success of this approach meant that the procession of the final night was also repeated during the ‘Peace Week’ of 1937.²⁴¹

5.10. Conclusions

Through this exploration of George MacLeod’s open-air preaching as radical street performance, I demonstrate the applicability and versatility of this analytical approach. This is so, even where the sources are fragmentary and conjecture is necessary. In addition, through the analysis, I accentuate several features of MacLeod’s open-air preaching with reference to his radical intent, the significance of the streets, and the nature of his performance. This informs our understanding of MacLeod’s open-air preaching in a number of ways.

First, MacLeod’s open-air preaching was thoroughly incarnational. It was motivated by an incarnational understanding of mission. The content was informed by a holistic understanding of the gospel. Homiletically, this meant that conceptually and physically, MacLeod’s open-air preaching occurred in the ‘market-place’ realities of peoples’ lives. Consequentially, even when contesting ideas, he was on the side of people. This was something generally recognised and clearly intentional in the ‘Week of Friendship’. The event of his open-air preaching, therefore, was an embodied witness to the gospel which its content proclaimed.

²³⁹ MacLeod, ‘Message’, [unnumbered].

²⁴⁰ MacLeod, ‘Message’ [unnumbered].

²⁴¹ ‘Peace Week in Govan: Assemblies at New Govan Cross’, 1, and ‘Peace Week in Govan: Open-Air Meetings Well Attended’, 5.

Second, MacLeod had a clearly defined and strong performing persona. This can be related in part to his privileged background, military experience, and strength of character. In this respect, comparisons between the 'Christian Soldier', MacLeod, and the 'Captain Preacher', Haldane, discussed in chapter 4, are unavoidable. This notwithstanding, there is a significant difference with respect to the nature of their performing personas. MacLeod was a Church of Scotland minister. He was such at a time when this still carried some social status and respect. In this role he was something of a media celebrity. In turn, he played the role of minister to the full. He emphasised it. He brought to it his own demographic, physical, and psychological qualities. He gave it drama and glamour. He made it popular and provocative. This as much as any single act explains the 'showman' impression that he could create without any sense of this being false or inauthentic to who he was. His persona was a symbol in his communication.

Third, he would take and make opportunities for open-air preaching. The streets of Govan were a space where religious and political street oratory was common. People were used to listening to convictionally motivated speakers in the streets. MacLeod entered the space physically and conceptually with his own message challenging the dichotomy between the spiritual and the material. He used locations where people would gather and exploited the symbolism that particular locations and occasions could add to his message. He initiated activities. Such a strategy involves risks. It may not be successful, such as perhaps with the preaching that accompanied the street drama. He was, however, willing to try. This readiness and willingness was part of the drama of his open-air preaching. His participation as a speaker at SCND events was consistent with this practice of taking and making opportunities and with his incarnational theology.

Fourth, he had a range of open-air preaching styles. On the one hand, question and answer times created participation, fostering a democratic approach. This opened up the activity beyond his control and radical intents. On the other hand, he was prepared to use religious symbolism in a way that turned open-air preaching into dramatic religious street theatre. Here the often implicit symbolism of persona and space was made explicit. Sometimes, both approaches were brought together such as at 'Peace Week' in 1937. At the student mission in Edinburgh, the open-air

preaching was a 'trailer' for another act. In the mid-1940s, it was to encourage and provoke discussion following a dramatic presentation. With SCND, it was part of protest and procession. MacLeod's open-air preaching, therefore, was varied in its approaches and not limited to simply one expression. Accordingly, generalisations about the style of his open-air preaching require caution.

Fifth, he was a skilful open-air preacher. This should not be underestimated. He was able, in the streets, to improvise in relation to audience and context. He could combine directness with image laden language and thus simultaneously communicate with clarity and also with parabolic appeal. To be sure, these skills were also a feature of his in-church preaching. That he could transmit these to the streets may be at least in part a consequence of the socio-religious context where sermons were still a familiar genre of communication. Be this as it may, in the open air he had the ability to think on his feet and work with what could be a contentious crowd. His humour, wit, and patience, were an important part of this.

Finally, MacLeod's most successful open-air preaching, in terms of his transformative intents, appears to have taken place in Govan where and when he was the local parish minister. In this context the physically embodied words of the popular minister were reinforced by the persistent gospel witness and worship of the congregation. In addition, his open-air preaching at special events was often only one part of what was taking place. His open-air preaching, therefore, did not carry the full weight of his transformative concern. It was one act among many. Claims regarding its efficacy, therefore, require to be placed in this wider context of acts and activities.

Chapter 6: The Open-Air Preaching of Open Air Campaigners (GB) as Radical Street Performance

‘Presenting Christ by all means everywhere’ (Open Air Campaigners’ Motto).¹

6.1. Introduction

In chapters 4 and 5, I analyse two historical case studies of open-air preaching as radical street performance. In this chapter, I now apply the analytical method to the open-air preaching of the group OAC Ministries (GB), formerly Open Air Campaigners (GB).² This relates particularly to material researched and observed, over a three year period, from April 2006 to April 2009. I have chosen OAC GB as a case study for a variety of reasons. They are a group committed to missional open-air preaching, the focus of my study. They have preached regularly in Scotland, maintaining the localised emphasis of my research, even although I consider the activity of the organisation beyond Scotland.³ They provide a contemporary example of open-air preaching. In addition, OAC GB is a group which through their use of the sketch-board and other creative methods, seek to gather audiences and negotiate a hearing for their message, through the medium of artistic entertainment.⁴ Through exploring the preaching of OAC GB in this way, I will again demonstrate the applicability of the analytical approach I am advancing.⁵ I also highlight certain

¹ J.A. Duffecy, *The Truceless Warfare Advances* (Florida; Daniels Publishing, 1983), 191.

² OAC Ministries is the ‘working’ name for Open Air Campaigners (GB). Hereafter referred to as OAC GB. I will refer to the international organisation simply as OAC or OAC International and to the Scottish group as OAC GB Scotland.

³ Roger Gray, a full time Staff Evangelist with the OAC GB Scotland branch, since 1984, preached his last open-air sermon in Glasgow on Saturday 22nd February 09, prior to moving to Bridlington. The group continue under volunteer leadership.

⁴ OAC GB usually spells sketch-board as ‘sketchboard’ or occasionally ‘sketch board’. Except where I retain original spelling in quotations, I will use the spelling of, ‘sketch-board’.

⁵ Although OAC GB preachers make use of ‘art’ and ‘entertainment’, the analysis of their activities as radical street performance, is my interpretation. As will become apparent in the discussion, although they present themselves as artists and entertainers, they have a somewhat paradoxical relationship with these roles, regarding these personas and the associated activities as useful tools, rather than authentic representations of who they are.

features of the dynamics of the open-air preaching promoted and carried out by OAC GB.

6.2. Sources and Methodology

Several main sources of information form the basis of the analysis in this chapter. The first is written material produced by the organisation. Some of this relates to the history of the organisation.⁶ Some are internal OAC GB documents, relating to rules, policies, and procedures.⁷ Other material is ‘training’, or ‘how to’ material, published under the auspices of OAC and OAC GB, or written by former members.⁸ One piece of training material which was particularly helpful was the *Open-Air Evangelism Training Manual*, provided for the training at a ‘Reach the City’ event in Bristol in 2006.⁹ In addition, there was the information available from OAC websites.¹⁰

⁶ There is no written history of OAC GB. J.A. Duffecy, *The Truceless Warfare Advances* (Florida; Daniels Publishing, 1983), provides the only history in print of the international organisation. It includes a chapter on the formation of the branch in Britain. David Fanstone, the founder of OAC GB, provided a brief description of the GB branch in an article, ‘The Meeting was Stopped but the Ministry was Started’, *OAC News: Anniversary Edition* (OAC Ministries: 2008), [unnumbered].

⁷ In July 2006, I was provided with information relating to ‘Requirements for Staff Applicants’ [n.d.], and ‘Job Description for Associate Evangelists’ [n.d.]. In March 2009 in response to questions, I received a copy of the ‘Rules of Open Air Campaigners (GB)’ as adopted at the Annual Meeting on the 6th May 1986 and as amended at subsequent General Meetings up till September 2005. In April 2009 I was provided with a copy of the modules to be undertaken by those training to be full time staff evangelists, although these are currently under review.

⁸ From OAC International: *Evangelism Training Manual* (Nazareth PA: OAC [n.d.]); *Training Manual* (Nazareth PA: OAC [n.d.]); Gerald H. Bradley, *Evangelistic Sketchboard Sermons* (Nazareth PA: OAC [n.d.]), *Open Air Evangelism: A Training Presentation* (Nazareth PA: OAC, 1985). From OAC GB, Graham Simms, *Preaching and Painting the Gospels* (Brighton: OAC, 1981), *Gospel Sermons in Paint for Children* (Surrey: OAC, 1982); Mark Howe, *Open-Air Evangelism: A Practical Handbook* (Alresford: Christian Literature Crusade, 1991); Korky Davey, *Biblical Patterns of Evangelism...To-Day* (2000), available for download from, www.korky.info, accessed 27/3/09; Stephen Gurnett, *Forty Sketch Board Messages for Street Preachers* (London: OAC, 2008 [on CD-ROM]). Although an older and international book, Noel C. Gibson, *The Fisherman’s Basket* (NSW: Mission Publications, 1984) was recommended to me by Roger Gray and some of its content seems seminal for other writing.

⁹ *Open-Air Evangelism Training Manual* (Manchester: OAC, 2006). Although this manual was not handed out at the training I attended in 2008, it was the basis for what was being done in the seminars. Some of the same material is found in greater and lesser detail in other publications. Hereafter referred to as *Training Manual*.

¹⁰ In particular, ‘OAC International’, <http://www.oaci.org/home/index.html>, accessed 25/3/09 and ‘OAC Ministries’ (GB), <http://www.oacgb.org.uk/>, accessed, 25/3/09.

A second source of information has been interviews, e-mail correspondence, and informal conversations with staff members of OAC GB. I conducted an interview with Roger Gray the Scottish evangelist with OAC GB on the 12th April 2006. I conducted a telephone interview on the 5th May 2006 with David Fanstone, the founder of OAC GB. On the 31st March 2009, I conducted a telephone interview with Hamish Leighton, an OAC GB staff evangelist who has recently completed training. In addition to this, between April 2006 and April 2009, I had e-mail correspondence with another ten OAC GB staff evangelists including the General Director Dave Glover. During periods of observing and participating in the activities of OAC GB, I also had the opportunity to have informal conversations with OAC GB staff evangelists, associate evangelists, and volunteers.¹¹ Unless I have specific permission to attribute comments to particular people or the information is available elsewhere in the public realm, I have maintained the anonymity of individuals in relation to comments made.

A further source of information is the material gathered through my observations of the open-air preaching of the OAC GB Scotland team. This team was led by Roger Gray an OAC GB staff evangelist and included a number of volunteers. They preach in Glasgow city centre on Saturday afternoons. I observed them preaching on thirteen separate Saturdays between April 2006 and March 2009. Seven of these occasions were in 2006. I heard in total 31 open-air sermons by 6 different preachers. The majority of sermons were preached by 4 regular preachers including Roger. All were men.¹² During these visits I functioned as an overt observer participant.¹³ My primary approach was to observe and record information in as unobtrusive a way as possible without my presence influencing the event in any significant way. I recorded events by audio, photographs, and notes written up after each sermon. I also engaged

¹¹ Staff evangelists are those who have specifically joined the organisation. Associate evangelists are people involved in full time evangelistic ministry that complements the aims and objectives of OAC ministry. Volunteers are individuals with no formal connection but participate voluntarily in OAC GB activities.

¹² There is nothing *per se* in the 'Rules' of OAC GB open-air to prevent women preaching. The involvement of women is determined by the local branches and the support of churches. There are some women who preach under the auspices of OAC as staff evangelists. OAC GB staff (A), e-mail correspondence with author, 1/4/09. I saw none preach.

¹³ For a discussion and description of the general methodological qualitative approach described here and in the next paragraph see, Bryman, *Social*, 291-317.

in informal conversations with the OAC GB Scotland team. Only on one occasion did I actively seek, in an informal way, to canvas the opinions of passers-by. During these thirteen observational visits to Glasgow and on two separate Saturdays when I was unable to locate the team, I also intentionally noted the other commercial, entertainment, political, and religious performances which were taking place in the streets. This was to allow me to place the OAC GB street activities within the wider context. In this respect, the streets of Glasgow provide the primary location for my observations about the 'streets' in my analysis.

The final primary source for information was my attendance at a week long mission activity called 'Reach the City Cardiff '08'. This was jointly organised by OAC GB and Operation Mobilisation Lifehope. It ran from the 28th June till the 6th July, 2008. This event included daily training and as one of its core activities, open-air preaching. With respect to this activity and with the concern not to disrupt in any way the event, my role was one of overt participant observer. Although the research purposes of my attendance were known, I participated fully in the general training that was given and in particular the seminars on open-air preaching. These seminars were led by various OAC GB staff and associate evangelists. As an outcome of this training, I also preached twice in the streets of Cardiff in the manner in which I had been trained. I had opportunity during this week, to observe OAC GB staff evangelists, associate evangelists, and volunteers preach in the streets. These were recorded in a similar way to Glasgow. In total, during this week, I heard 15 open-air sermons by 10 different preachers. This provided the opportunity to gain an overall understanding of the rationale and the ethos of the organisation, and a wider exposure to the range and variety of skills and abilities of the preachers. I had less time in Cardiff, however, than in Glasgow to note as fully the alternative commercial, entertainment, and religious performances that were taking place in the streets.

Throughout a three year period, therefore, I have had the opportunity to research OAC GB through written material, interview, correspondence, observation, and participation. The analysis offered will be based upon the information gathered in this period and as described above. As an organisation OAC GB has established ideas and practices with respect to evangelism and open-air preaching. The

preachers, however, are all individuals who bring to these ideas and practices their own approaches and opinions.¹⁴

6.3. OAC International

OAC is an international, interdenominational, ‘ministry of evangelism committed to preaching the Gospel to the unreached through open-air and other outreaches, and mobilising the Church to do the same’.¹⁵ It consists of ‘an association of autonomous OAC Nations’.¹⁶ These national groups are bound together by the OAC International statement of faith, its policy, its statement of purpose, and the qualities of fellowship and trust.¹⁷ These last qualities are clearly important because OAC International is not a centralised missionary organisation. Although there is an International Conference every four years, each national group is given the freedom to develop its own character according to context.¹⁸

The primary accessible source for the history of OAC as an International organisation is the work by J.A. Duffecy, *The Truceless Warfare Advances*.¹⁹ Duffecy served in several important staff roles within the organisation. He played a key part in its development into an international body. His account is based upon archive material now deposited in the Mitchell Library, Macquarie St., Sydney and his own recollections and experiences.²⁰ His work has the uncritical partiality of one committed to OAC and its methods of evangelism. Be this as it may, it records and

¹⁴ David Fanstone said individual evangelists were not clones of the organisation, Fanstone, interview, 5/5/06.

¹⁵ ‘Our International Structure and Statement of Purpose’, <http://www.oaci.org/who/index3.html>, accessed 24/3/09.

¹⁶ ‘Statement of Purpose’, <http://www.oaci.org/who/index3.html>, accessed, 24/3/09.

¹⁷ For the current content of the various statements, <http://www.oaci.org/home/index.html>, accessed 24/3/09.

¹⁸ ‘Statement of Purpose’, <http://www.oaci.org/who/index3.html>, accessed, 24/3/09.

¹⁹ J.A. Duffecy, *The Truceless Warfare Advances* (Orlando: Daniels Publishing, 1983).

²⁰ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 246.

recounts the faith, the origins, and the communicative creativity of the organisation as it has sought to fulfil its purposes.

As told by Duffecy, OAC traces its roots to the work and ministry of the Englishman Edward Percy Field. Field was not the founder of the organisation. It was however, the lasting impression made by the open-air meetings he started in Sydney Australia in 1892 that led to the formation of the body called 'The Open Air Campaigners' in 1922.²¹ From 1932 onwards, the movement began to spread beyond Sydney, first in New South Wales and then following World War 2, throughout the other States in Australia.²² The first overseas branch was opened in New Zealand in 1954.²³ In 1956 the work spread to the United States of America.²⁴ The Canadian branch opened in 1957.²⁵ In 1963 the movement spread to Europe with the establishment of a branch in Germany.²⁶ This was followed by Britain in 1968 and Italy in 1969.²⁷ Today OAC International has branches in 20 countries.

6.4. OAC GB

The particular concern of this study is the open-air preaching of OAC GB. It was founded by the Englishman David Fanstone on the commission of the OAC International Council.²⁸ Fanstone, a graduate from Cambridge University with a degree in agriculture, went in 1962 to the USA to study at Bible College. There were possibilities that he might become an agricultural missionary overseas.²⁹ While at Columbia Bible College, he was introduced to the work of OAC, took a course in

²¹ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 31.

²² Duffecy, *Truceless*, 41-90.

²³ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 107-108.

²⁴ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 128-136.

²⁵ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 137-167.

²⁶ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 181-194.

²⁷ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 209-234.

²⁸ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 210.

²⁹ Fanstone, interview, 5/5/06.

open-air preaching, and began to participate in the practice. While previously suspicious of open-air preaching, he now saw its effectiveness.³⁰ In 1966 after two years back in England working with a church, he went to Australia and New Zealand where he underwent training and joined the organisation. The opening of the British branch took the form of an open-air meeting held at Brighton and Hove seafront, on Easter Day, 1968. The meeting was stopped by the police because the gathered crowd were blocking the pavement. The ministry, however, had been started.³¹ As Fanstone carried out the work, others sought training, joined the staff, and established branches in their own areas. By the end of the 1970's, there were five or six branches operating in key cities.³² Today, OAC GB has 17 staff evangelists and two trainees in 14 locations.³³

One of OAC GB's present staff evangelists is Roger Gray.³⁴ It was Roger who along with his wife Rosemary started the Scottish branch in 1984. Gray had become interested in open-air preaching while a student at the Bible Training Institute in Glasgow, now the International Christian College. Later, while working as an accountant, he was introduced to the work of OAC. In June, 1980, he attended a week long OAC GB training event at the then Birmingham Bible Institute. On returning to Glasgow, with the training he had received and the materials he had bought, he engaged in open-air preaching OAC GB style. As a volunteer, he remained in touch with Fanstone, who in 1983 encouraged him to join the organisation, which he did. Under Gray's leadership a team of volunteers was established in Scotland. At the time of my observations, the OAC GB Scotland team were preaching every Saturday between March and December, alternating between Sauchiehall Street and Buchanan Street in Glasgow. These are two of Glasgow's busiest pedestrian precinct shopping areas.

³⁰ Fanstone, interview, 5/5/06.

³¹ Fanstone, interview, 5/5/06.

³² Fanstone, 'The Meeting was Stopped but the Ministry was Started', *OAC News: Anniversary Edition* (2008), (unnumbered).

³³ Situation as recorded on website, 'OAC Ministries GB', <http://www.oacgb.org.uk/about-us.asp>, accessed, 24/3/09.

³⁴ The following account is based upon an interview with Roger Gray, carried out on the 12/4/06.

6.5. OAC GB and Open-Air Preaching

To say that open-air preaching is an important practice for OAC GB may appear to state the obvious. Yet, some comment is required. As already indicated, OAC International has its roots in open-air preaching. Some of those who played an important part in the development of the organisation, including Duffecy, came to Christian faith themselves through such evangelism.³⁵ Their advocacy of the practice, therefore, was a matter not simply of biblical injunction and practical efficacy but also existential meaningfulness. In turn, it was a practice to which they brought considerable creativity. One of the early features of the work was the development of ‘gospel wagons’. These were motor vehicles modified to provide such things as platforms, canopies, sounding boards, screen, amplification systems, and small portable organs. These wagons allowed the OAC evangelists to pull up in a variety of locations and have a ready-made base for their preaching.³⁶

For the early OAC evangelists, open-air preaching was a way of fulfilling their motto, ‘Presenting Christ by all means everywhere’.³⁷ This motto, however, also invites the use of other ‘means’. As the work has developed, both chronologically and geographically, other means in addition to open-air preaching have taken on greater importance in OAC activities. Consequently, it was in part to recognise the diversity of ‘means’ that their evangelists were involved in throughout the world, which led to some branches changing their working name from Open Air Campaigners to OAC Ministries.³⁸ The fact, however, that not all branches did this, suggests a concern that the central role of open-air preaching was not lost. The OAC International website states:

Our historical roots are very much in open-air evangelism, and many nations still spend much of their time in the open air. However, our desire is to be flexible in our methodology while maintaining a clear commitment to proclamation

³⁵ Duffecy, *Truceless*, xiv, so also for example, Bill Tate, 39 and Les Werry, 76.

³⁶ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 34-35, 46, 51, 123-124, 155-156, and 160, records something of the use and development of ‘gospel wagons’ as part of the open-air preaching.

³⁷ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 191.

³⁸ This change was agreed at the OAC International Conference held in Belgium in 1996. Australia and New Zealand had already changed their names and Great Britain wished to do so.

evangelism. In some circumstances we recognise that other methods are most appropriate.³⁹

This indicates a tension at the international level between open-air preaching as a primary means of evangelism and a commitment to 'all means'. It is a tension created by the international nature of the organisation and its own purposes. Negatively, this tension can be seen as casting doubt upon the effectiveness of open-air preaching. Positively, it can be seen as ensuring that where open-air preaching is carried out, this is justified on more than historical or traditional grounds.

OAC GB is one national branch that changed its name from Open Air Campaigners to OAC Ministries. Not every staff evangelist agreed with this.⁴⁰ The OAC GB staff and associate evangelists use a wide variety of means in a wide variety of locations. Work in schools among children has a significant role.⁴¹ Be this as it may, open-air preaching remains a 'distinctive' practice of OAC GB, as is clearly stated on the website.⁴² This public commitment is undergirded by the 'Rules' of OAC GB which state:

The object of the Society is to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ by all means but without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing to do so particularly by open air evangelism.⁴³

It is thus a requirement of all those applying to become staff evangelists that they 'have a clear calling from God to proclamation evangelism particularly in the open air and other outgoing situations'.⁴⁴ Despite the variety of means used, therefore, OAC GB retains a 'particularity' in emphasis, to proclamation through open-air preaching.

³⁹ 'Statement of Purpose', <http://www.oaci.org/who/index3.html>, accessed, 27/3/09

⁴⁰ OAC GB, staff (B), e-mail correspondence with author, 26/3/09.

⁴¹ Children's work including in the open air has been a feature of OAC work from the beginning. See Dawn Clancy, *Child's Play: Sketchboard Talks* (Suffolk: Kevin Mayhew, 2004). I concentrated on open-air preaching targeted at adults.

⁴² 'OAC Ministries GB', <http://www.oacgb.org.uk/about-us.asp>, accessed 27/3/09.

⁴³ 'Rules of Open Air Campaigners (GB)', [unnumbered].

⁴⁴ 'Requirements for Staff Applicant', [unnumbered].

6.6. The Open-Air Preaching Event

OAC GB open-air preaching is marked by two particular performance features which for the sake of clarity require to be introduced prior to any further discussion on the radical, the streets, and the performance dynamics of the event. The first of these is that the open-air preaching is an intentional, audio-visual, presentation. The second is that it is a team event.

OAC GB open-air preaching is an audio-visual presentation. This involves the use of a sketch-board.⁴⁵ The sketch-board, which is 115cm wide and 76cm high, stands on



(Figure 1)

three legs in order to achieve a top height of 2 metres and thus be visible to any people gathered in a crowd. The preachers begin their performance by painting some initial images and symbols on a sketch-board. This is referred to as the ‘paint-up’ and can last about five minutes. They then continue to paint words and symbols on the board at various intervals throughout their talk, which generally lasts no more than ten minutes. The goal is that completion of the board should coincide with the end of the talk. Figure 1 is a completed sketch board from Cardiff, 30th June, 2009.

⁴⁵ See *Figure 1*.

Sketch-board use has been a feature of OAC preaching to adults since 1947.⁴⁶ It was introduced after Duffecy attended the Sydney Royal Easter show.⁴⁷ There amidst all of the other entertainments, his attention was caught by ‘Poster King’ Lionel Neate, holding a large audience ‘spellbound’, as ‘he advertised famous products using a giant sketchboard from a platform high above the crowd’.⁴⁸ All of the 46 OAC GB open- air sermons I observed were accompanied by sketch-board painting, as were the two I delivered. Sketch-board painting is an integral part of OAC open-air preaching.

Team work is also a central feature of the OAC GB open-air preaching event. The team, including the preacher, can be as small as two.⁴⁹ The recommended minimum size of team is six.⁵⁰ Team members help with the physical dynamics of carrying and setting up the sketch-board. The primary purpose of the team members, however, is to form an interested audience making it easier for others to stop and listen. Then, at the end of the talk, it is their responsibility to engage in conversation with any people who have responded to the message or who have stayed till the end. Such is the importance attributed to the team activity that clear instructions are given as to what they should and should not do, including in the areas of dress, conversation, and demeanour.⁵¹ There is no bit part activity. For all the emphasis placed on proclamation evangelism, the statement was made that team members may be more important than the preachers.⁵²

⁴⁶ A form of sketch-board illustration had been used with children from the beginning, Duffecy, *Truceless*, 81.

⁴⁷ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 81.

⁴⁸ Duffecy, *Truceless*, 81.

⁴⁹ Gurnett, *Forty*, 14.

⁵⁰ *Training Manual*, 20.

⁵¹ *Training Manual*, 20-23.

⁵² ‘Open-Air Meeting’, training seminar, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

6.7. Presenting Christ

The radical in radical street performance, as discussed in this thesis, refers to its transformational nature. This relates primarily to the intent of the performers. In turn, the efficacy of the performance can be measured in relation to this intent. The nature of radical street performances, however, as events that transgress the conventions associated with buildings, means that their outcomes can transcend the primary intent of the performers. In this section, I discuss the efficacy of OAC GB open-air preaching in relation to their primary radical intent and also demonstrate the ways in which the influence and impact of their preaching transcends their primary concern of presenting the gospel, as they understand it, so that people will come to a personal saving faith in Christ.

6.7.1. To Save Some

The primary radical intent of OAC GB open-air preaching is to see people come to saving faith in Jesus Christ, as they present the gospel through their preaching. This intent is informed by biblical and theological convictions regarding the nature of the gospel, and the means by which it is best communicated. As to the nature of the gospel, the content is perceived to be that all human beings are sinful, separated from God, and deserving of eternal judgement. Christ, however, by virtue of his death and resurrection offers salvation.⁵³ As to the means by which this message is to be communicated in efficacious power, ‘proclamation’ is central.⁵⁴ This proclamation should centre on the cross and its significance. In addition, it should include a public invitation to respond to the gospel so proclaimed.⁵⁵ Consequently, the desire through cross-focussed preaching is to see individual lives transformed in their relationship with God, through ‘faith and repentance’.⁵⁶

⁵³ *Training Manual*, 40.

⁵⁴ ‘The Message’, training seminar, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

⁵⁵ ‘The Message’, training seminar, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

⁵⁶ *Training Manual*, 40.

This focus on the gospel, so understood, directly impacts the function and form of OAC GB open-air preaching.⁵⁷ As to function, it is ‘absolutely evangelism’.⁵⁸ This evangelism involves presenting ‘Christ Jesus to sinful men in order that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, they might come to put their trust in God through him’.⁵⁹ Consequently, all sermons follow a stylised form. They begin with some sort of human interest and ‘desire’. The ‘problem’ of human sin is raised. The ‘result’ of such sin is declared. The ‘remedy’ of the cross is announced. The necessity of ‘repentance’ is proclaimed. The ‘promise’ of God is stated.⁶⁰ An invitation to respond is then given, as people are invited to step forward and receive evangelical literature from the preacher. All the sermons I observed, in one way or another, had the same form and function shaped by the focus of proclaiming the necessity for personal salvation. Correspondingly, every OAC GB talk was accompanied by the image of the cross painted on the sketch-board.

This focus on personal salvation, understood primarily in terms of a person’s relationship with God, also explains the way in which OAC GB preachers generally treat current socio-political issues in their sermons.⁶¹ That is they do so, only as a means of gaining interest and in order to lead to what is considered the more substantive matter, of a person’s eternal spiritual status.⁶² As a consequence, they avoid any controversial topics that may detract from this. The general attitude of OAC GB preachers is expressed by one, in the response to the question, ‘Would you ever preach on social, ethical, or political issues?’, when they replied:

Yes I would but I would use those things to show the sinfulness of man and our need of God. I would not get party political though because I don’t want to create more barriers to the gospel in the ears of hearers.⁶³

⁵⁷ I import this language of focus, function, and form from Thomas G. Long, *The Witness of Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005).

⁵⁸ Gray, interview, 12/4/06.

⁵⁹ Quote attributed to J.I. Packer, cited in *Training Manual*, 8, original source not attributed.

⁶⁰ *Training Manual*, 37.

⁶¹ It appears from correspondence that one or two staff evangelists may directly address socio-political issues, OAC GB staff (B), e-mail correspondence with author, 30/5/06. What I go on to describe, however, is both the dominant response I received to enquiry and also what I invariably observed.

⁶² *Training Manual*, 35.

⁶³ OAC GB staff (C), e-mail correspondence with author, 15/5/06.

It is not necessarily that OAC GB preachers do not think that biblical teaching on such matters is important. They rather view this as part of the teaching ministry of the church, rather than the message of the evangelist.⁶⁴ Accordingly, they concentrate on what they see their task to be in the time available in the street. As one evangelist put it, ‘Our aim is to lift up Jesus not really to comment on political, social or ethical issues’.⁶⁵ The primary radical intent of OAC GB open-air preaching as indicated in the focus, function, and form of sermons, is to see the personal spiritual transformation of individuals. This is explicitly apparent not simply in the preaching. It undergirds the training given to team members, who are taught how to share their testimony, present the gospel, and lead a person to Christ.⁶⁶ It is obvious in the literature recommended and distributed.⁶⁷

6.7.2. The Efficacy of the Performance

The primary radical intent of OAC GB open-air preaching is to see people come to a saving faith in Jesus Christ. Measuring effectiveness, therefore, may seem a straightforward task of measuring ‘the number of conversions you have after each presentation’.⁶⁸ OAC GB open-air preachers, however, recognise that they may only play a part in the spiritual transformation of a person. The part they play is related both to the nature of the contact that they may have and the present spiritual status of the person encountered.⁶⁹ This being the case, efficacy requires to be considered at a number of levels to capture the potential impact of the event. The indicators of efficacy that I suggest, therefore, in terms of an increasing movement towards the radical intended goal are: the numbers of those who might see or overhear the event, the audiences who gather, the conversations that take place after the event, and the people who indicate a faith commitment. These indicators appear to capture all of

⁶⁴ OAC GB staff (D), e-mail correspondence with author, 30/5/06.

⁶⁵ OAC GB staff (E), e-mail correspondence with author, 10/5/06.

⁶⁶ *Training Manual*, 24-33.

⁶⁷ ‘Turn to God’ (Cardiff: OAC Ministries, 2001=1987).

⁶⁸ OAC GB staff (A), e-mail correspondence with author, 9/6/06.

⁶⁹ This was a point made in response to a question of effectiveness by a number of OAC GB staff evangelists.

what is meant by OAC GB open-air preachers when they talk about ‘reaching’ people through open-air preaching.⁷⁰

In relation to the above suggested indicators of the efficacy of OAC GB open-air preaching, the following can be said. First, such preaching has the potential and likelihood of being seen and overheard, albeit only in part, by large numbers of passers-by. In this respect, it is with some justification that the ‘Reach the City Cardiff’ report claims ‘hundreds’ heard the gospel preached at the open-air meetings.⁷¹ The actual nature and consequence of such overhearing, however, is of course difficult to specify.

Second, OAC GB open-air preachers do not always manage to gather an audience. Variables such as time of day, weather, what else is happening in the street, noise, team size, particular message, the preacher, and other less definable features all play a part.⁷² Regularly, however, OAC GB open-air preachers do gather an audience. A report from OAC GB activity in Manchester in 2005 estimated that over 15 outings some 1000 people stopped to listen.⁷³ As that figure indicates, audiences will normally range in size from single figures to tens rather than hundreds of listeners. The largest crowd I observed gather in Glasgow, was around 60 people at the initial paint-up of the board.⁷⁴ Audiences who gather are fluid. People come and go throughout the event usually only one or two staying throughout.⁷⁵ With respect to this, an argument made by advocates of the practice, is that those who stay only for a

⁷⁰ The metaphor of ‘reaching the unreached’ through open-air preaching is a common one in OAC GB, *Training Manual*, 10.

⁷¹ *Reach the City Cardiff – 2008* (OM Lifehope/ OAC Ministries, 2008), [unnumbered], received in e-mail correspondence with author, from OM Lifehope, 11/7/08.

⁷² One OAC staff evangelist said that the same talk on some days can gather a crowd and on other days not. Some days he said this could be a ‘spiritual’ issue. Some days it could be ‘him’. On other days it could be the people. This after all is a street that is always changing. OAC GB staff evangelist, conversation, Cardiff, 4/7/08.

⁷³ OAC staff (E), e-mail correspondence with author, 10/5/06.

⁷⁴ Observed, Glasgow, 1/7/06.

⁷⁵ My estimate based on observation.

time may return again to hear on another occasion.⁷⁶ Whether or not this is the case, audiences, as described, gather to listen and watch OAC GB open-air preaching.

Third, conversations stimulated by the preaching or by the free standing and finished sketch-board, or the literature being handed out, often take place as the team operates in the street. I have frequently observed this in Glasgow. The Manchester report speaks of ‘good conversations with about 100’ people over the 15 occasions.⁷⁷ The Cardiff report records ‘900 one to one conversations’.⁷⁸ Perhaps more than any other single indicator, it is this that points to the potential of the event to at least stimulate engagement and discussion in the streets, on matters related to the Christian faith.

Fourth, faith commitments are sometimes indicated. Claims regarding this can be restrained. One staff evangelist writes, ‘I have seen folk converted on the street in the UK – though sadly not often’.⁷⁹ Sometimes the claims are bolder. The final report from the Cardiff mission states, ‘32 people made first time decisions to follow Christ’.⁸⁰ Some of these ‘decisions’ were narrated as a direct result of the open-air preaching events. No indication, however, was given as to how the longevity or sincerity of such indicated faith commitments would be measured. I am also unaware of any claimed personal faith commitments resulting from the open-air preaching events that I observed in Glasgow.

It is difficult, therefore, to offer definitive concrete outcomes in relation to OAC GB open-air preaching in relation to their primary radical intent. The indicators, however, not least the conversations stimulated, suggest that at a variety of levels and in a variety of ways, people are ‘reached’ through such preaching. It can also be argued that the efficacy of open-air preaching has to be measured relative to the success and ability of the Christian Church, through others means, to bring the gospel

⁷⁶ Gibson, *Fisherman’s Basket*, 85.

⁷⁷ OAC GB staff (E), 10/5/06.

⁷⁸ *Reach the City Cardiff – 2008* (unnumbered).

⁷⁹ OAC GB staff (D), e-mail correspondence with author, 30/5/06.

⁸⁰ *Reach the City Cardiff – 2008* (unnumbered).

message to the un-churched. In this respect, one OAC GB evangelist asked, ‘how many churches have contact with so many unconverted people?’⁸¹ In turn, another claims that through an hour of open-air preaching, ‘more unbelievers can hear the message in that time than many inside preachers will preach to in a whole year’.⁸² Such claims do not in any way establish OAC GB open-air preaching as an effective means of communicating the gospel. They do, however, place the question of efficacy within a wider context of the effectiveness of preaching in general, in its missional nature.

6.7.3. Further Outcomes

The preceding suggestion that the efficacy of OAC GB open-air preaching has to be considered relative to the success of in-church preaching highlights an area where OAC GB open-air preaching transcends the primary radical intent. OAC GB understands itself as an ‘arm of the church’.⁸³ The organisation seeks wherever possible to work with local churches.⁸⁴ Evangelists are members of local churches, draw their teams from them, and some clearly have good relationships with some local churches. The event at Cardiff had the involvement of 13 local churches.⁸⁵ Be all this as it may, in many respects the practice of OAC GB open-air preaching transgresses regular church activity and many of the conventions associated with in-church preaching. Open-air preaching is not the dominant contemporary expression of preaching. Open-air preachers are not ordained. Minimal formal theological training is required, even for full time evangelists.⁸⁶ The organisation is not associated with any particular denomination. The preaching is not accompanied and supported by hymn singing, prayer, Scripture reading, offering, or any other

⁸¹ OAC GB staff (E), e-mail correspondence with author, 10/5/06.

⁸² OAC GB staff (F), e-mail correspondence with author, 4/4/06.

⁸³ OAC GB staff (E), e-mail correspondence with author, 10/5/06.

⁸⁴ This concern and desire to work in partnership with local churches is apparent throughout the organisation and in its presentation of itself.

⁸⁵ *Reach the City Cardiff – 2008* [unnumbered]

⁸⁶ One year training at Bible College or the equivalent through correspondence, ‘Requirements for Staff Applicants’, unnumbered.

attendant acts of worship, including the sacraments.⁸⁷ In addition even with respect to evangelism and such courses as ‘Alpha’, the activities of OAC GB open-air preachers can be regarded by those in churches, as ‘outdated’ and ‘unhelpful’.⁸⁸ Despite their concern to work with churches, therefore, OAC GB open-air preaching exists in a tense relationship with in-church preaching and practices. As a consequence of this, as open-air preaching is promoted this implicitly and explicitly critiques in-church preaching and practice. It exposes the conventions and limitations associated with such activities, not least in terms of their missional and public nature. In this way, therefore, the transgressive nature of OAC GB open-air preaching transcends the radical intent of seeing people come to faith in Jesus Christ, by challenging in-church preaching and practice.

It may rightly be argued that none of the preceding discussions concerning efficacy and the challenges of open-air preaching take into account the negative reactions which OAC GB open-air preaching provokes. Many passers-by do not stop and some can have strong negative views concerning the activity.⁸⁹ Accordingly, the negative perceptions of Christianity which open-air preaching creates appears to be one of the reasons that other Christian people, as indicated above, find the practice ‘unhelpful’. From the perspective of the radical, however, when negative reaction is created, the issue is not that change has not occurred, for the action of preaching has created reaction.⁹⁰ By creating negativity, however, the change has transcended that which is desired by the preachers in their radical intent. One possible response to this by OAC GB preachers is to appeal to the naturally offensive nature of the gospel to unbelieving people.⁹¹ No special theological pleading, however, is necessary. All

⁸⁷ *Training Manual*, 20, states explicitly that such things should not accompany the preaching.

⁸⁸ OAC GB staff (E), e-mail correspondence with author, 10/5/06, OAC GB staff (C), e-mail correspondence with author, 15/5/06.

⁸⁹ Negative comments made by passers-by to the author in response to the question as to what they thought about the open-air preaching that was taking place, included questioning the sanity of the preacher and resentment at them ‘pushing’ their views on others, 24/5/08. In this limited informal questioning of about 18 people, reactions were mixed, with some defending the right of the preacher even although not agreeing with what was being said.

⁹⁰ The idea that art is action and action by definition changes the world if only a little is expressed by Tony Kushner in ‘How Do You Make Social Change?’, *Theatre*, 31:3 (2001), 62-93, 62. In this article by art, he is referring to various forms of performances.

⁹¹ ‘Open-Air Meeting’, training seminar, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

cultural interventions from ideologically committed positions, that are seeking to bring about change, are likely to create negative as well as positive reactions. Arguably, this can be regarded as a good thing, a democratising act, stimulating debate and discussion where there was none, although there is always the risk of hatred and violence. Rather than avoiding the uncontrollable nature of reaction, radical street performers need to negotiate this through their skills and approach, if they hope to gather an audience and gain a hearing. Some evidence of this is apparent in the activity of OAC GB. Through the use of the sketch-board and the way they present themselves, they seek not to be personally offensive even although they cannot control how people will respond to their presence or message.⁹² Indicative of some success in this area was the comment made in Glasgow, regarding the preaching of OAC GB open-air preachers, when it was said, 'They are not so bad, having pictures and a few words'.⁹³ In whatever way they manage this, however, negative response is another area where OAC GB open-air preaching creates a response that transcends their primary radical intent.

A third and more positive way OAC GB open-air preaching results in outcomes beyond the primary intent is the impact which it has on the practitioners. According to Kershaw, the transcendent of the radical in radical street performance creates 'currently unimaginable forms of association and action'.⁹⁴ This is apparent in OAC GB open-air preaching events when people through participation 'feel released to witness to strangers'.⁹⁵ Accounts from Cardiff by participants in the open-air preaching events describe 'excitement and terror', and growth in faith, vision, and personal experience.⁹⁶ One writes, 'Although some of us struggled with the Open Airs we were all changed'.⁹⁷ This is the radically transcendent or, as described in the anthology by Cohen-Cruz, the 'spiritual' experience that participants can experience

⁹² Hamish Leighton, interview, 31/3/09.

⁹³ Comment made to author on 24/5/08 in Glasgow in response to question as to what person thought about the open-air preaching that was taking place.

⁹⁴ Kershaw, *Radical*, 18.

⁹⁵ OAC GB staff (C), e-mail correspondence with author, 15/5/06.

⁹⁶ *Reach the City Cardiff – 2008*, [unnumbered].

⁹⁷ *Reach the City Cardiff - 2008*, [unnumbered].

through undertaking radical street performance activity.⁹⁸ Indicative of the potential long term impact of such transcendent experiences through participation in open-air preaching, is the story of Hamish Leighton.⁹⁹ Hamish has just recently finished his training as an OAC GB full time staff evangelist. University educated, 43 year old Hamish, has left a career as a management consultant in transport and planning to pursue this unpaid role.¹⁰⁰ He relates this decision, in part, to the ‘spiritual experience’ of his participation in a two week mission involving open-air preaching with OAC GB in 1986. Participation in open-air preaching as radical street activity, therefore, has the potential to radicalise the participant through the transcendent nature of the experience, to engage in further action. Here the comment by Tony Kushner, in a discussion about the social change that ideologically committed performances can bring, appears apposite, ‘Art changes the activist, activism changes the artist; and activism, finally, is what really changes the world’.¹⁰¹

From the perspective of the radical in radical street performance, OAC GB open-air preachers have a clear transformative intent. I have indicated that in terms of the dynamics of the preaching event this intent shapes the focus, function, and form of the preaching. Since this intent is to see people changed there are difficulties in definitively measuring the efficacy of individual preaching performances. This notwithstanding, I have identified a number of indicators that show that OAC open-air preaching does variously ‘reach’ numbers of people. In addition, I have shown that in seeking to bring about this primary change other outcomes that transcend the primary intent are created. Some of these require to be negotiated by the preachers in terms of their relationship with those who they are trying to reach on the one hand and the church they are seeking to serve on the other. In addition other transformational outcomes such as the impact of participation on the lives of the performers, can lead in the direction of further action and change.

⁹⁸ Walker, ‘Border’, 87.

⁹⁹ For a published account of Hamish Leighton’s story see ‘The End of the Road’, *OAC News: Anniversary Edition* (2008), [unnumbered]. My account is based on that and my telephone interview with him, 31/3/09.

¹⁰⁰ OAC GB staff evangelists have to raise their own financial support.

¹⁰¹ Kushner, ‘How Do You Make Social Change’, 63.

6.8. Seeking an Audience in the Streets

In this section, I analyse open-air preaching from the perspective of the streets, as understood in radical street performance, where as previously discussed, the streets are regarded as offering a gateway to the masses and are a site of ideological contest. In this analysis, I argue that OAC GB open-air preachers have a very pragmatic approach to preaching in the streets. In turn, while the preachers regard their preaching as engaging in a contest, they understand this contest in spiritual rather than concrete terms. Consequently, they do not directly engage in socio-political debate in the streets or make use of the performing opportunities which this creates. This notwithstanding, I contend that OAC GB open-air preachers do contest the other ideologies present in the streets by bearing witness to a particular Christian perspective. They also compete with other acts and activities in the street for the attention of passers-by. This involves surmounting negative perceptions towards both the content and nature of their open-air preaching. To do this, I demonstrate, they enter the street in the performing space of art and entertainment. This, however, does not remove from them the necessity of facing and overcoming the particular challenges of performing as ideologically committed performers, in the contested space of the open air.

6.8.1. A Pragmatic Approach

For OAC GB preachers, the streets offer a location where they can reach the masses and fulfil their motto of ‘Presenting Christ by all means everywhere’. Several arguments are posited by OAC GB supporting the practice.¹⁰² First, there is the example of Scripture. Attention is drawn to the open-air preaching of the patriarchs, prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, the early church, and the apostle Paul. Second, there is evidence of history. Here, reference is made to the open-air preaching of Whitefield and Wesley and its association with times of religious revival. Third, there is the contextual argument. The oft cited statistic is that 90% of the British

¹⁰² *Training Manual*, 10.

population do not attend church.¹⁰³ In contrast the streets are ‘where people are’.¹⁰⁴ The clear sense of the case advocated is that there is a great missional need to reach people. Scripture and history show the effectiveness of open-air preaching through the ages in fulfilling this task.¹⁰⁵ In the contemporary situation the streets offer a location where numbers of people can be reached as quickly as possible.¹⁰⁶ Open-air preaching offers a simple and cheap way of doing this, requiring neither building nor advertising nor expensive equipment.¹⁰⁷ There is, therefore, a very pragmatic understanding associated with the OAC GB commitment to open-air preaching.

From this pragmatic perspective, it would appear that for OAC GB preachers, the value of preaching in the open air is almost biblically, historically, and practically, self-evident. Accordingly, OAC GB open-air preachers are primarily practitioners rather than theorists or theologians.¹⁰⁸ This is not a value statement but indicates the position from which they approach matters. Indeed, for one staff evangelist at least, it is a position from which theologians and theorists can be criticised.¹⁰⁹ A consequence, however, of the pragmatic concern is that at times their advocacy lacks biblical, theological, historical, and communicative nuance. The point here is not that a robust theoretical and theological case cannot be made for open-air preaching. It is rather that OAC GB preachers are driven primarily by a strongly missional impulse to go to the streets with the pragmatic concern of reaching as many people as possible through proclamation evangelism.

The pragmatic approach that OAC GB open-air preachers have to the streets is seen in the way they choose specific sites to preach in. The primary criterion is to identify a place where there are lot of people who have time to listen.¹¹⁰ This does not mean

¹⁰³ ‘About Us’, www.oacgb.org.uk/about-us.asp, accessed, 27/3/09.

¹⁰⁴ *Training Manual*, 10.

¹⁰⁵ *Training Manual*, 10.

¹⁰⁶ The pragmatic necessity of reaching people was cited by all the OAC staff evangelists I corresponded with.

¹⁰⁷ *Training Manual*, 10.

¹⁰⁸ OAC GB staff (D), e-mail correspondence with author, 30/5/06.

¹⁰⁹ Davey, ‘Evangelism That Really Works’, *Biblical Patterns*, Chapter 5 [unnumbered].

¹¹⁰ *Training Manual*, 19.

choices lack any sophistication. Like all radical street performers, they have to work with a “‘found” environment’.¹¹¹ Be this as it may, in choosing specific sites with reference to such matters as the space available, the direction of the wind, the position of the sun, and the lack of surrounding noise, the primary concern is to ensure that they get a place where they can be seen and heard by the greatest number of people.¹¹² On other occasions particular locations are chosen in conjunction with specific times of day. This allows them to target particular audiences. The London team for example, target various groups at various times including preaching in Romford in the late evening to attract young clubbers.¹¹³ OAC GB open-air preachers, therefore, in their practical and strategic choices of specific locations, are heavily influenced by their pragmatic concerns of reaching as many people as possible.

The OAC GB concern with the pragmatic is necessary. It is a pre-occupation, however, that can hinder the appreciation of other potentially significant understandings of the streets and suitable site choice. In this respect, one consideration, in particular, appears to be given little attention. This is the significance that particular locations can have through their symbolic and inter-textual meanings and associations. To ignore this is unfortunate because the physical attributes of a site can aid the message being communicated by providing a suitable backdrop and scenery.¹¹⁴ In addition, meanings attributed to places through tradition, convention, and normal usage, can mean that performing specifically there becomes part of the drama of the event. This happens as the performance works for and against the associated meanings.¹¹⁵ To make this more concrete, I observed little awareness from OAC GB preachers that in the streets, a bank for example, could provide a particularly suitable backdrop for a message that included reference to the inadequacy of wealth as a foundation for life.¹¹⁶ Conversely, I observed little

¹¹¹ Sally Harrison-Pepper, *Drawing a Circle in the Square* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1990), xv.

¹¹² *Training Manual*, 19-21.

¹¹³ OAC GB staff (C), e-mail correspondence with author, 10/3/08.

¹¹⁴ Mason, *Street*, 136.

¹¹⁵ Mason, *Street*, 139.

¹¹⁶ One OAC GB sermon which has this message is entitled, ‘Take a Chance’.

engagement with ideas that to perform in some sites may create ideological paradoxes of meaning that require to be overcome.¹¹⁷ While understandable, therefore, the pragmatic concern of OAC GB preachers with respect to location can militate against developing both the theory and practice of their street preaching performances.

6.8.2. Contest and Competition

To preach in city centre streets is to enter a place of ideological contest. It requires competing for the attention of passers-by. This is definitely the case in the pedestrian precincts of Buchanan Street and Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, where the OAC GB Scotland preachers regularly preach on Saturday afternoons.¹¹⁸ Each side of the performing space is framed by shops advertising their products. In the precinct space, especially on Saturdays, there can be a range of stalls, activities, and peoples, representing social, political, religious, and entertainment interests and performances. Social activists include the representatives of charities seeking support. Regular political activists include anarchists, pro-Palestinian groups, and the proponents of various left-wing parties. Scientiologists, with their offer of free 'Stress Tests', a Muslim bookstall, Hare Krishna representatives, and various open-air preachers, make up the religious presence. The street entertainers range from solo to group musicians, artists, balloon sculptors, magicians, escapologists, and human statues.

In preaching in such streets, OAC GB preachers understand their preaching to be engagement in contest. This contest, however, is viewed in spiritual and personal terms. It is a 'battle for souls'.¹¹⁹ Their task is to try and rescue people from Satan

¹¹⁷ OAC GB seeks to work in co-operation with authorities and commercial interests. In so doing there is no demonstrated awareness that this may create the paradox of having to work within and with a system that may at least in places be ideologically opposed to the message that they are presenting.

¹¹⁸ Glasgow is the place where I had the greatest opportunity to observe and analyse the contest of the streets. It is this analysis that forms the basis of the description of the streets in this section. At other times and in other streets there would be similar and dissimilar contests taking place. Reading during the research and limited observations at Cardiff, would confirm that this is so.

¹¹⁹ *Training Manual*, 52.

and his will.¹²⁰ As a consequence of this, OAC GB preachers do not try explicitly to contest other specific socio-political ideologies present in the street, either in terms of the locations they choose or in the content of their sermons. They are concerned with ‘eternal matters’ not those ‘of this world’.¹²¹ This can be contrasted with the activity of other ideologically committed street campaigners, who at times actively contest with one another. One example of this is a group called ‘Anonymous’, who during 2008, staged performance based oppositions to the Scientologists in Buchanan Street.¹²² Another example is the direct action which left-wing groups took against the British National Party, when it was canvassing in the street.¹²³ The presence and conflict between such groups could be regarded as opening up a socio-political performing space, in which preachers could offer an opinion. I found no evidence, however, that OAC GB preachers considered the desirability of engaging in such direct contests.

While OAC GB preachers do not engage explicitly in direct contest with other specific ideologies physically represented the streets, their preaching does bear witness to an alternative view of reality.¹²⁴ In this way, they contend with the other ideologies. Their preaching implicitly contests any notion that the religious has no place in this public space. Consequently, they deny the omnipotent sufficiency of the other ideas and ideologies being advanced in the street by offering an alternative. More specifically, they address unbelief and posit theological concepts such as Jesus, sin, salvation, and forgiveness, as ideas that require to be given cognisance among people who may not otherwise think of them. In terms of performance, therefore, OAC GB open-air preaching can be viewed as an act of witness or protest, pointing to an alternative perspective, which without the preachers, may be absent or silent. Understood as the performers of witness, the preachers are those who take

¹²⁰ ‘Open-Air Meeting’, training seminar, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

¹²¹ *Training Manual*, 54.

¹²² For one account see, ‘Anonymous Strikes Scientologists in Glasgow’, 23/3/08, <http://www.indymediascotland.org/node/4187>, accessed 12/4/09.

¹²³ For one account see, ‘Glasgow: BNP Not Welcome Here’, <http://www.socialistparty.org.uk/articles/4143>, accessed, 12/4/09.

¹²⁴ ‘Witness’ is a category that is used by Cohen-Cruz to describe certain radical street performances, Jan Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction: Witness’, Cohen-Cruz, *Radical*, 65-66.

responsibility for bringing into public view something that they know. They are thus, from the perspective of radical street performance, ‘fulfilling theatre’s role as embedded in its etymological root *theatron*, seeing place’.¹²⁵ Having made it known, it is then the responsibility of those who have seen, whether they act or not but they cannot claim ignorance.¹²⁶

Contesting in this way with other ideologies, OAC GB open-air preachers also have to compete for the attention of passers-by, for their particular religious message. In Glasgow, OAC GB is not the only religious group in the streets. The other non-Christian religious groups, however, do not use public proclamation. Rather, they either run stalls or make personal approach. There are other Christian groups, however, who, like OAC GB, make use of preaching.¹²⁷ Despite variety in style and different specific theological perspectives, all of these groups, like OAC GB, proclaim a message of individual salvation requiring repentance and faith. As a result, they all face the same difficulties of trying to gather an audience and gain a hearing, while communicating a specifically Christian message in pluralistic post-Christian Britain. In addition, they try to do so by using the sermon. This is a genre of communication that may be regarded by people as anachronistic and authoritarian rather than novel and authoritative. OAC GB staff evangelist, Steve Gurnett, articulates the situation as follows:

In Great Britain today relatively few people attend church. Most people are therefore not used to listening to the preaching of God’s Word and many are suspicious of those people who have enough conviction to stand in a crowded street and expound the truths of the Bible. In the context of today’s British society, such people are usually ignored or treated as a little eccentric, at the very least.¹²⁸

In the light of these difficulties, in order to attract an audience and gain a hearing, OAC GB open-air preachers integrate the appeal of art and entertainment with their

¹²⁵ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction: Witness’, 65, italics Cohen-Cruz.

¹²⁶ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction: Witness’, 65.

¹²⁷ Some are solo preachers with no demonstrated specific church connection. Other regular preachers are from the ‘New Mercy Church’ in Glasgow, <http://www.newmercy.org.uk/>, accessed 12/4/09. This group started preaching regularly in Glasgow sometime in 2007, e-mail correspondence with author, 23/6/08. Other occasional church groups I observed using open-air preaching were: ‘Destiny Church’, 13/5/06; ‘The Potter’s House Christian Fellowship’, 13/5/06, 10/6/06; ‘Struthers Memorial Church’, 30/9/06.

¹²⁸ Gurnett, *Forty*, 13.

proclamation. This is done primarily through the use of the sketch-board. In this way, OAC GB open-air preachers, while eschewing the space of socio-political contest in the streets, seek to move beyond the space of religious performance occupied by other open-air preachers and gather an audience and gain a hearing by entering the performance space of art and entertainment. This particular feature of their performance will be discussed more fully later.

6.8.3. An Audacious Act

As with other street performers, OAC GB preachers physically enter the contest and competition of the streets ‘without the safety of an impenetrable frame’.¹²⁹ Consequently, various difficulties have to be faced. To do so involves tenacity and audacity.

One of the first and most obvious difficulties that OAC GB preachers require to face is the vagaries of weather. The vulnerability of OAC GB preaching was exposed on Saturday 21st October 2008. With the ‘disruption’ of rain, the team took cover in shop doorways.¹³⁰ In so doing they abandoned a completed sketch-board with the colour running on the bold painted words, ‘Christ will appear a second time’. The irony was unavoidable. This occasion aside, OAC GB preachers have to work with changeable weather. Poor weather makes their personal situation less comfortable, their performance harder to deliver, and an audience much more difficult to gather. Despite this, one volunteer stated that there were few Saturdays where the weather had stopped them from preaching altogether.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 3.

¹³⁰ Mason describes rain as a serious disruption street performers face, *Street*, 103.

¹³¹ OAC GB Scotland volunteer (A), 28/3/09.

A second difficulty OAC GB preachers require to navigate is the various laws regarding street preaching.¹³² Generally criminal and civil law permits preaching in public places.¹³³ Reasons, however, that can be used for stopping an event are, threat of disorder, causing an obstruction, and creating noise nuisance.¹³⁴ In addition there are the differences between rights in public and private space. During the period of my research, I was aware of two occasions where OAC GB preachers were moved on. The first of these, at Cardiff Bay, was on the basis that they were preaching on private property.¹³⁵ The second was when a Glasgow shopkeeper objected to the preachers setting up their sketch-board outside of his shop. The strategy of OAC GB is to work with the law and shopkeepers.¹³⁶ OAC GB preachers, therefore, do not see their street preaching as campaigning for freedom of public space over and against privatisation. Such ideological considerations are not part of their performance. Other radical street performers see this differently.¹³⁷ This said the general advice given by OAC GB about the law has a degree of boldness. They state, 'If in doubt – preach'.¹³⁸

Third, there are the risks of negative reaction. These include the danger of physical assault. OAC GB recognises this fear and risk while claiming it is unlikely to happen.¹³⁹ I did not see any OAC GB preachers being assaulted. More common were negative and insulting shouted comments. Usually these were given in passing or short lived. Occasionally, however, they took the form of more persistent and disruptive heckling.¹⁴⁰ Normally, OAC GB preachers ignore such heckling unless it

¹³² Different types of performers will have to contend with different types of legislation, Howard Steel, 'Staging Outdoor Events: A Brief guide to Legalities and Permissions', in Coult and Kershaw, *Engineers*, 232-236. OAC GB gives advice on the law, *Training Manual*, 46-49.

¹³³ Open-air preachers require no licence to preach in Glasgow as no money is changing hands, Glasgow City Council e-mail correspondence with author, 12/4/07.

¹³⁴ Relevant laws relate to 'Public Order Acts', 'Police Acts', 'Highway Acts', and local authority bye-laws.

¹³⁵ Cardiff, 1/7/08.

¹³⁶ *Training Manual*, 51; Gurnett, *Forty*, 17-18.

¹³⁷ Campaigning against the privatisation of public space is one of the interests of performing artist, Bill Talen, Lane, 'The Reverend Billy', 61.

¹³⁸ *Training Manual*, 49.

¹³⁹ *Training Manual*, 51.

¹⁴⁰ Glasgow, 13/5/06.

can be used to their advantage.¹⁴¹ They do not see it as a part of their performance. Consequently, they do not preach in locations such as Hyde Park where debates and argumentation are an established part of the event.¹⁴² Despite this, the fear of interjectors has to be faced and the reality dealt with.¹⁴³

Fourth, there is the possibility of public failure. One OAC GB preacher expressed it as follows, ‘you just “do” and “die” and nothing apparently is happening’.¹⁴⁴ Such failure can be rationalised theologically by open-air preachers. It is God’s work to make people respond.¹⁴⁵ Be this as it may, there are matters of self-esteem to be overcome in a context where you may fail to gather an audience on the strength of your performance. When I first preached in the open air with OAC GB, I did so as a lecturer in homiletics with considerable years of in-church preaching experience.¹⁴⁶ While other volunteers commented that my preaching was very ‘professional’ the fact was that few stopped and or stayed to listen. I personally found this disconcerting, unsettling, if not embarrassing. One OAC GB open-air preacher suggested that an unwillingness to face such public failure may be a reason why in-church preachers are uncomfortable trying open-air preaching.¹⁴⁷ It is an unavoidable risk of the activity.

Analysed from the perspective of the streets in radical street performance, therefore, OAC GB preachers go to the streets for the very pragmatic reason that it offers a gateway to the masses. This location, however, is one of contest and requires competing for the attention of passers-by. OAC GB preachers do not contest or compete for people’s attention by explicitly entering the space of socio-political debate. I argue, however, that their presence and message bears witness to and

¹⁴¹ *Training Manual*, 53.

¹⁴² Fanstone, interview, 5/5/06.

¹⁴³ OAC GB gives advice on dealing with ‘The Interjector’, *Training Manual*, 53-55.

¹⁴⁴ OAC GB staff (D), e-mail correspondence with author, 30/5/06.

¹⁴⁵ ‘Open-Air Meeting’, training seminar, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

¹⁴⁶ Cardiff, 4/7/08. I preached, as trained, using an established OAC GB open-air sermon entitled, ‘Are You Fit’.

¹⁴⁷ OAC GB staff (H), e-mail correspondence with author, 30/5/06.

contends for an alternative reality. In addition, OAC GB preachers do not remain simply in the territory of religious discourse. Rather, they seek to gather an audience through the use of art and entertainment. To do this does not shield them from the difficulties of street performing as ideologically committed communicators. Consequently, if their actions demonstrate what Cohen-Cruz calls the ‘arrogance’ of radical street performers, they also demonstrate the audacity and ‘bravery’ of such performers, as they bodily risk for what they consider to be the common good.¹⁴⁸

6.9. The Art of Communication

Having analysed OAC GB open-air preaching according to concepts of the radical, and then the streets, as understood in radical street performance, I now analyse the preaching with reference to certain performance features. In so doing, I will pay particular attention to the persona of the preachers as street artists, the skills that they employ, and the way in which, through the movement of their performances, they seek to secure an ideological transaction with their listeners.

6.9.1 Preaching as Street Artists

Integral to the audio-visual event of OAC GB open-air preaching is the painting of words and images on the sketch-board, as the preaching proceeds. According to OAC GB proponents, the stated benefits of this approach are various. It attracts attention. It aids communication of the message. It reinforces what is said. It aids memory through the use of the visual in addition to the audio. It is a creative way of presenting the truth.¹⁴⁹ More than this, however, it overcomes negative perceptions to stereotypical understandings of street preachers. It allows them to come across as artists rather than preachers, as entertainers rather than educators. As a consequence it creates a less threatening environment for people to stop and watch than a preacher

¹⁴⁸ Cohen-Cruz, ‘Introduction’, 3.

¹⁴⁹ These are among the reasons given for sketch-board use, *Training Manual*, 12 and 16, and Gurnett, *Forty*, 13.

with a Bible would. A frequent comment is that with a sketch-board, ‘You can act the part of an artist. Preachers are threatening artists are not.’¹⁵⁰ Through the use of the sketch-board, therefore, OAC GB preachers create the persona of a street artist.

The street artist persona is one the OAC GB preachers cultivate in various ways. The OAC GB preaching event begins with painting. The preachers may open with some humorous words about their picture.¹⁵¹ Painting intersperses the talk. When speaking, preachers hold a paint brush. They paint the words on the board before they speak them.¹⁵² While preaching, they stand at the side of the board so that it can be seen and while painting try to do so in such a way that people can clearly see what is happening on the board.¹⁵³ Some OAC GB preachers suggest dressing brightly and colourfully.¹⁵⁴ I observed one who wore a multi-coloured shirt with pink trousers.¹⁵⁵ Much of the above is in keeping with the spirit of street entertainment which ‘is to be light and joyful, to add colour and activity’.¹⁵⁶ The entertainment provided by the painting and dress is on occasions supplemented by other street acts such as riding a unicycle, escapology, juggling, and illusions.¹⁵⁷ Not all OAC GB preachers have such abilities.¹⁵⁸ All, however, use the sketch-board and through it convey the persona of street artist as a way of gathering an audience and gaining a hearing.

While OAC GB open-air preachers create and cultivate the persona of street artists this is something that creates a paradox. OAC GB preachers wish to place an emphasis upon proclamation and the power of the Word of God preached, rather than

¹⁵⁰ *Training Manual*, 16.

¹⁵¹ Such is apparent in the scripts provided by Gurnett in his book *Forty*, see for example, 28 and 40, and was also apparent in his live preaching, Cardiff, 1/7/08.

¹⁵² *Training Manual*, 17.

¹⁵³ Gurnett, *Forty*, 18.

¹⁵⁴ Gurnett, *Forty*, 16.

¹⁵⁵ Observed Cardiff, 5/7/08.

¹⁵⁶ Mason, *Street*, 31.

¹⁵⁷ Gurnett, *Forty*, 16. I observed several staff evangelists use illusions as part of their presentation, Cardiff, 30/6/08, 1/7/08.

¹⁵⁸ No-one in the Glasgow team had such abilities.

on any technique used.¹⁵⁹ Accordingly, in order not to detract from the Word proclaimed, they emphasise that the sketch-board is simply a ‘visual aid’ or a ‘tool’ in order to aid proclamation and gather an audience.¹⁶⁰ It is a means to an end. At its crudest, it is described as ‘bait for catching fish’.¹⁶¹ There thus appears to be no sense of artistic or connotative revelation in its own right apart from the denotative revelation of proclamation which accompanies it.¹⁶² They understand themselves, therefore, primarily as preachers of the Word.¹⁶³ The role of artist, the way in which others see them, and the way in which they encourage others to see them, is simply a part that they ‘act’.¹⁶⁴ Here the danger, however, is that in trying to avoid falseness they unintentionally create it by presenting themselves in a way which is not authentically who they understand themselves to be.

From the perspective of radical street performance as discussed in chapter 3, however, this separation of self and persona is not necessary. In radical street performance, art, ideology, and everyday life converge in the performance event. OAC GB preachers, therefore, may be playing the role of artist. Insofar, however, as through this role they are expressing their deepest convictions, it becomes a real and genuine expression of who they are. It is not false in any sense but rather an authentic embodied public expression of the ideological convictions they wish to communicate. From the perspective of performance, in order to explain the relationship between self and performing persona, the double negative can be employed. Thus when performing artist Bill Talen uses the persona of the street preacher, the Rev. Billy, to express his ideological convictions, it can be said that the

¹⁵⁹ One OAC staff evangelist put it as follows, ‘the whole point is the preaching. The rest are just props and devices’, OAC GB staff (C), e-mail correspondence with author, 15/5/06.

¹⁶⁰ Gray, interview, 12/4/06.

¹⁶¹ The metaphor of fishing and of seeking to capture people captured by Satan is one developed by Gibson, *Fisherman’s Basket*, 1-4, and was occasionally used in the Cardiff training.

¹⁶² This is demonstrated in the way in which they compare the use of the sketch-board to the signs and dramatic actions of Moses, the prophets, Jesus, and the apostles, and reduce these to simply visual aids that allow proclamation to take place, *Training Manual*, 12.

¹⁶³ That necessity of ‘a clear calling from God to proclamation evangelism particularly in the open-air and other outgoing situations’ is the first requirement of those who wish to be staff evangelists, ‘Requirements for Staff Applicants’, [unnumbered].

¹⁶⁴ This of course also indicates that they do not see preaching as artistic or ‘preacher’ as a role that is played. These are not, however, the substantive issues being discussed here.

Rev. Billy is ‘not not Talen’.¹⁶⁵ The double negative creates a distance between the persona and the person while acknowledging that they cannot be separated. Applying this to OAC GB open-air preachers it can thus be said that they are ‘not not artists’. They may be more than artists but not less so. This perspective allows their sketch-board work to be much more integrated into a unified performance of the gospel rather than being reduced to something separate from themselves such as ‘bait’.

6.9.2. Skilful Performers

One reason why OAC GB preachers are cautious about describing themselves as artists is because they regard themselves primarily as preachers. Another is that few claim artistic skills. One OAC GB staff evangelist writes, ‘not many of our guys are in fact that artistic’.¹⁶⁶ To be sure, most OAC GB open-air sketch-board presentations consist of only a few painted words and simple images. The style of OAC GB preaching, however, draws upon years of accumulated experience. In addition it requires the exercise of skills involving the integration of preaching and sketch-board painting, in the context of the open air.¹⁶⁷

One area where knowledge and skills are employed is in preaching delivery. OAC GB training gives attention to correct posture, voice projection, care of voice, and the necessity of speaking clearly with variety in pace, pitch, and tone.¹⁶⁸ From observation a strategic choice is also apparent. OAC GB preachers do not shout or use P.A. systems. The reason they give for this is that excessive volume keeps people at a distance. Instead what is desired is ‘intimacy’.¹⁶⁹ The practical result is that despite the emphasis on proclamation, the OAC GB preaching style is quite conversational. Some attention is also given in training to ways in which facial

¹⁶⁵ Reynolds, ‘Moving Targets’, 63.

¹⁶⁶ OAC GB staff (D), e-mail correspondence with author, 30/5/06.

¹⁶⁷ The integration can perhaps be one of the most difficult things to master, Gurnett, *Forty*, 12.

¹⁶⁸ *Training Manual*, 44-45. During the week at Cardiff we were given training on these matters from an OAC GB associate evangelist who had been a professional actor.

¹⁶⁹ Conversation with staff evangelist, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

expression, eye contact, and body movement, all play a part in keeping an audience interested and in communicating the personality of the preacher.¹⁷⁰ Thus another reason given for not shouting is that it distorts the face and ‘gives the impression of being a fanatic’.¹⁷¹ The suggested length of a street sermon is no more than 10 minutes.¹⁷² After that the preachers should ‘stop’ and let the team do their work.¹⁷³

Another area where knowledge and skill are displayed is in the use of the sketch-board. Some of this relates to the materials used. These include the best size of board with necessary fittings that make it portable, flexible, and stable. They include the best paper to use, the most secure way to fit it, the best brushes, the qualities of different paint, and the best way to carry paint outdoors.¹⁷⁴ Some of the expertise concerns skills of production. These include the way in which information is added to a board so that there is a communicative development around it.¹⁷⁵ They include, albeit in a fairly undeveloped way, use of particular colours and layout with reference to psychological theories of visual communication.¹⁷⁶ There are also important physical matters emphasised, such as where to stand in relation to the board when painting and speaking, so the board can be seen and the preaching heard. The paint also has to be easily accessible but not a hazard. Carelessness in this area can lead to farce.

In both the areas of preaching and painting and in the integrated performance of the two, not all those I observed were equally proficient. Inadequate volume, lack of variety in voice, poor eye contact, overly slow paint-up, mistakes in spelling on the board, lack of friendliness in tone and body language, insufficient integration

¹⁷⁰ *Training Manual*, 34; Gurnett, *Forty*, 14.

¹⁷¹ *Training Manual*, 38.

¹⁷² Gray, interview, 12/4/06.

¹⁷³ *Training Manual*, 34.

¹⁷⁴ Conversations among OAC GB open-air preachers at Cardiff indicated that their activities in all these areas were a result not simply of personal preference, but of discussion, shared knowledge and experimentation.

¹⁷⁵ *Training Manual*, 37-38.

¹⁷⁶ Unreferenced appeal to ‘Market Research’ is cited to support what is put on the board and the colours used, *Training Manual*, 36-37.

between board and sermon, were among the failures in basic skills which were sometimes apparent. In this regard, there was an unsurprising difference in quality between the more and less experienced open-air preachers. This indicates that as with all arts ‘practice and discipline’ are required in addition to inclination, willingness, and gifting.¹⁷⁷

In addition, the above description of expertise and skills of OAC GB preachers cannot hide the fact that the end picture on the sketch-board is far from a saleable piece of art. From a radical street performance perspective, however, several observations can be made. First, the rudimentary can be suited to the streets. Physically, this may be all that is possible. Conceptually, the makeshift and rough, can be regarded as an art form in its own right.¹⁷⁸ It challenges elitist understandings and democratises art.¹⁷⁹ Its ‘home made’ nature can break down the separation between performers and audiences as it ‘demystifies’ the process of performing.¹⁸⁰ Corresponding to this, a phrase used by one OAC GB preacher in Cardiff, to build a relationship with an audience was, ‘this is so simple anyone can do it’.¹⁸¹ Second, the sketch-board is the art of the street propagandist, the ideologically committed performer who wishes to make a statement.¹⁸² It is not the art of those interested in admiration from a specialist few equipped to appreciate it.¹⁸³ Third and following on, the sketch-board represents the street art of those who have very little time to communicate their message. There is little time to unpack complex ideas.¹⁸⁴ What is communicated needs to be seen.¹⁸⁵ It requires, therefore, whether through exaggeration, or size, or simplicity, to be direct in what it is communicating. This

¹⁷⁷ *Training Manual*, 36.

¹⁷⁸ John Fox, ‘Commissions and Audiences’, in Coult and Kershaw, *Engineers*, 16-30, 26.

¹⁷⁹ Mason, *Street*, 12-13.

¹⁸⁰ Fox, ‘Commissions’, 26, see also Mason. *Street*, 12-13.

¹⁸¹ OAC GB associate, Cardiff, 2/7/08.

¹⁸² For a discussion on the relationship between propaganda and art in what can be described as radical street performances, Henry Lesnick, ‘Some Introductory Notes to Guerilla/Street Theater’, in *Guerilla Street Theater*, ed. by Henry Lesnick (New York: Avon, 1973), 11-25.

¹⁸³ Mason, *Street*, 74-75.

¹⁸⁴ Fox, ‘Street and Outdoor’, 33.

¹⁸⁵ Fox, ‘Commissions’, 25.

does not mean that what is communicated need be or will be without ambiguity. The communication of ambiguity can become part of the performance. The finished OAC GB sketch-board standing in the street, with no obvious symbol other than perhaps a red cross, can raise questions from passers-by. This can stimulate a second explanatory performance.¹⁸⁶ OAC GB sketch-board painting, therefore, from the perspective of radical street performance, for all its basic nature, is ideologically committed street art.

6.9.3 Progressing Transaction

Radical street performers, seek through their performances, to secure ideological transaction with their audiences, in the direction of change. OAC GB preachers seek to see people move from non-faith in the direction of faith in Jesus Christ. The way in which they try to facilitate this by their preaching event is through a series of five steps progressing from ‘Attention’ to ‘Response’.¹⁸⁷ As expressed by OAC GB, ‘This is a direct route to take a person from where he is to where you want him to be’.¹⁸⁸ In order to achieve this progression, four ‘moves’ require to be made.¹⁸⁹ Since each move involves intensification in content and personal challenge, they represent a point at which listeners may leave. On the other hand, their choice to stay may represent growing interest.

Attention (-Move One-) **Interest** (-Move Two-) **Spiritual Concern** (-Move Three-) **Application** (-Move Four-) **Response**

Figure 2: A Four Move Progression

¹⁸⁶ Gurnett, *Forty*, 13. This was my own experience after I had preached in Cardiff.

¹⁸⁷ *Training Manual*, 35.

¹⁸⁸ *Training Manual*, 35.

¹⁸⁹ See *Figure, 2*. For the sake of analysis, I import the language of moves from David Buttrick, *Homiletic* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987) without a commitment to his phenomenological approach.

Represented in this way, the progression through the OAC GB preaching event towards ideological transaction is linear. When analysed, however, it is more dynamic and complex.

First, OAC GB preachers use the sketch-board in a way that not only attracts initial 'Attention' but through the stimulation of 'curiosity', seeks to hold it throughout. One way they do this is by only gradually revealing words and images as they go through the talk. For this reason, an incomplete word is often deliberately kept right to the end, in order to keep people guessing as to what it might be.¹⁹⁰ More than this, the way in which images and words appear on the sketch-board can help keep attention. This is a particular attraction of the ladder lettering which OAC GB preachers use, although other devices can also be employed.¹⁹¹ In ladder lettering, the words are created in the background colour of the box, through the application of simple paint strokes. This gives the words the impression of 'appearing' rather than being written. In addition, it allows one colour of words to appear through the use of a different coloured paint brush. Some OAC GB preachers highlight this in their talk as part of the act.¹⁹² There is, therefore, a simple but illusory nature to the way items are painted on the sketch-board that can sustain attention throughout the presentation.

Second, there is a major perceptual shift to be negotiated when the preacher changes from being simply painter to painter/speaker. This happens at 'Move One' when the preacher finishes the initial paint-up of the board and begins to deliver their talk. In order to manage this move they introduce a topic of perceived human 'Interest'. Since, however, there is no desire to create controversy these topics are often of a very general nature such as, 'Being Lost', 'Life', and 'Fitness'.¹⁹³ If the topic is of sufficient interest to the audience or at least presented in an interesting way, some people gathered to watch the painter will stay and make the shift from painter to painter/speaker. If not, from my observations, this is one of the key points where audiences leave, as they realise that the event is not what it initially appeared. The

¹⁹⁰ *Training Manual*, 16.

¹⁹¹ 'Wax resist', Gurnett, *Forty*, 19.

¹⁹² Leighton, interview, 31/3/09.

¹⁹³ These are all themes I have observed being preached on.

strength of OAC GB preachers using general human issues may be that it avoids controversy, the weakness, however, is that without controversy and specificity, their issues can lack sufficient interest to keep listeners beyond the initial attention of the paint-up.

Third, for OAC GB preachers the most ‘challenging’ aspect of their presentation is ‘Move Two’ from human ‘Interest’ to ‘Spiritual Concern’. OAC GB describes this move as the one that requires most skill.¹⁹⁴ To make the jump from ‘Interest’ to ‘Spiritual Concern’ too quickly, all at once, or too late, can easily cause people to lose interest. They, therefore, seek to introduce the spiritual content ‘subliminally’ and gradually build up the ‘main message’.¹⁹⁵ Strategies employed to avoid too great a topical leap from ‘Interest’ to ‘Spiritual Concern’ include stating early in the talk that the presentation will be ‘entertaining with an edge’ or ‘challenging’. Another approach is to draw in content from the Bible in a round about way, by using phrases such as, ‘There is a line from Handel’s Messiah that quotes the Bible’.¹⁹⁶ Since facilitating an ideological transaction involves starting with an audience’s ideology and then moving beyond it, this move is clearly critical and perhaps more than any other determines success. Part of the difficulty, however, is that OAC GB preachers are actually carrying out two moves at this point. For it is not simply that they start addressing a human interest topic from the perspective of the spiritual. That would be a move in its own right. Rather, as well as introducing spiritual content they actually also change topic, from the initial theme announced and which may have gained listener interest, to their substantive subject of a person’s spiritual life with God in terms of personal salvation. It may be that it is the conceptual nature of this topical shift, more than the use of particular words such as ‘sin’ and ‘Jesus’, that cause people to walk away at this point.¹⁹⁷ Be this as it may, OAC GB would argue

¹⁹⁴ *Training Manual*, 35.

¹⁹⁵ *Training Manual*, 35.

¹⁹⁶ Observed in the preaching of staff evangelists, Cardiff, 30/6/08 and 1/7/09.

¹⁹⁷ In conversation with various OAC GB preachers they indicated that they thought that it was the use of particular words that caused people to walk away. Here, I am suggesting that the reason could lie less in the use of certain words and the turn to the spiritual although that probably plays a part and more in the attendant conceptual shift from what interests the listeners as important to what the OAC GB preachers think is important.

personal ‘Application’ and ‘Response’, are essential to the spiritual claims of the gospel, and accept that rejection is a possible response.¹⁹⁸

Fourth, there is the role of the team. The climax of the performance is seeking response. Street entertainers pass round a hat. OAC GB preachers offer literature.¹⁹⁹ At this point the team reveal themselves. Up till then they have been acting as audience. That is they have been ‘hidden performers’, seeking to influence the behaviour of others in gathering and listening in preparation for the climax.²⁰⁰ Interestingly, the use of hidden performers is a strategy that has been used by some ‘guerilla theatre’ radical street performers.²⁰¹ It is a practice, however, that raises ethical issues regarding ‘manipulation’.²⁰² In defence, from the perspective of ideologically committed performance, it can be argued that the strategy breaks through insulated minds, that hidden manipulation is going on all the time, and that it is justifiable if its outcome is that people have more choices and freedom than before.²⁰³ OAC GB does not really address the ethical issues related to how they use the team in this regard, although the team are instructed not to respond to the gospel invitation so that they do not mislead people.²⁰⁴ In addition OAC GB could argue that people freely come and go all the time, team action simply makes gathering easier and that since the team reveal themselves people would be free to comment on their actions. On the other hand, it may be that people will simply feel deceived. Certainly, however, the team, although at times hidden, perform throughout, from ‘Attention’ to ‘Response’ and beyond.

OAC GB open-air preachers, therefore, as analysed, are street performers who use the persona of artist to attract an audience and communicate their message. Though

¹⁹⁸ *Training Manual*, 36.

¹⁹⁹ This comparison was suggested by an OAC GB staff evangelist, conversation, 30/6/08.

²⁰⁰ This is not the language that OAC GB use but my performance interpretation of how the team are acting.

²⁰¹ Henry Lesnick, ‘The American Playground: A Note on Guerilla Theatre’, in Lesnick, *Guerilla*, 308-310.

²⁰² Lesnick, ‘The American Playground’, 309.

²⁰³ Lesnick, ‘The American Playground’, 308-309.

²⁰⁴ ‘Open-Air Meeting’, training seminar, Cardiff, 30/6/08.

the performance is simple and the product basic, it requires street skills and involves an understanding of what it means to try and secure an ideological transaction through the cultural intervention that is taking place. This is not to say that the performances are all that they could be or that the strategies used are the best. It is, however, to recognise the performance dynamics that are taking place.

6.10. Conclusions

As demonstrated in this discussion OAC GB open-air preaching can be analysed from the perspective of radical street performance. This supports the claimed validity of this approach as an appropriate way of analysing the dynamics of open-air preaching. From this analysis several conclusions can be drawn.

First, OAC GB open-air preaching demonstrates a current expression of the practice. It is an expression that seeks, at least in some ways, to respond in content and style to the contemporary context of post-Christian Britain. Difficulties are not denied. Audiences at best are more often in tens than hundreds. They are fluid and fickle in nature. People may resent and resist the attempts to preach at them in the streets and the event may reinforce negative impressions. This notwithstanding, through the cultural intervention of the OAC GB open-air performance, at various levels, the message is shown and spoken, seen and heard, by potentially large numbers of people. OAC GB open-air preaching makes the Christian message present and embodied in the public space of the streets. In this way, they protest against unbelief and contest with other ideas and ideologies. In addition, it is possible that through the preaching, presentation, and conversations, they make some contribution to the knowledge and possibly the faith status of some people who are among the large proportion of the population who do not attend church. In this there is at least an implicit critique of in-church preaching and in-church practice.

Second, the main theatrics of OAC GB open-air preaching are created through the use of the sketch-board, supplemented at times by other street acts of entertainment. In the varied activities of the street, therefore, they seek to gain a hearing for their

message by going beyond the arena of religious discourse and competing in the space of art and entertainment. This indicates a possible space where contemporary open-air preaching can deliberately situate itself in order to gather an audience and gain a hearing. This is not high art or pure entertainment but the art of the ideologically committed street communicator. It is a practice, however, that requires experience, practice, and skill to a degree that the simple nature of the talks and the basic nature of the painting may belie. On the other hand, to recognise that the space in which they are competing for attention is the space of art and entertainment may both place greater artistic performing demands on open-air preachers, and describe them in ways that they would not be comfortable with.

Third, theological convictions shape the resultant nature of the performances. For OAC GB open-air preachers the gospel message is the message of personal salvation centred on the proclamation of the significance of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. These convictions determine the focus, form, and function of both the sermons and the accompanying sketch-board presentations. From the perspective of radical street performance, a strength of this focus is that in the transient nature of the streets, the OAC GB open-air preachers have a defined and refined message that can be presented simply, clearly, and with visual support. A weakness of this approach, however, is that the issues which do matter to people are not dealt with in any seriousness and the impression given is that the gospel does not actually have anything direct to say to them. From a communicative standpoint, having gained interest the preachers can quickly lose interest. This may not be because they are now addressing these issues from a faith based perspective but because they actually shift conceptually from these issues to talk about what they consider is important. OAC GB open-air preachers believe in the importance of personal application and response. If, however, it is recognised that any sermon may only play part in a person's development, demonstrating the relevance of the gospel directly to such issues can surely become the valid goal of a sermon in its own right as a stage in helping people recognise the relevance of the message.

Fourth, OAC GB open-air preaching highlights the value of a team performance. The team as hidden and revealed actors in the unfolding drama of the event play a critical role in gathering, keeping, and engaging an audience. Through the use of the team

the preaching event becomes only part of the performance. It functions as stimulus to personal discussion and debate. The OAC GB team members have a clear agenda in such conversations. Yet, just like the preaching itself, conversations expose the performers and their message to the democratising freedom and opinions of the streets. Such exposure can become liberating for the performers if not those with whom they engage. There is a danger, however, that a gathered audience may resent the hidden role that some team members play when it becomes apparent.

Fifth, theological convictions and the lack of an integrating theoretical understanding beyond a determined pragmatism, prevent OAC GB open-air preachers from fully embracing their role as street performers. The consequences of this are that attention is not given to such matters as the symbolic significance of space, the way in which direct contest in the socio-political space can be part of the theatrics of the event, the importance of defending freedom of speech, how to negotiate both in self-understanding and in presentation their role as preacher/painter street artists. OAC GB open-air preachers would argue that such could distract from their core message and their primary role as preachers. The argument, however, is that insofar as the open-air preaching is a radical street performance issues related to performance theory could become instructive and enhancing.

Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusions

7.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapters, with specific reference to a number of case studies, I examine the ways in which analysing open-air preaching as radical street performance can inform our understanding of this expression of Christian preaching. In this chapter, I give a summary of the preceding discussion. For the sake of completion, I also draw from the individual case studies a number of conclusions, with respect to the theory, theology, and practice of open-air preaching, understood as radical street performance. In each instance, I suggest areas for further research. In addition, while this study is concerned with open-air preaching, I indicate a number of the implications of the research for the practice of in-church preaching, this being the dominant expression of preaching in the Global North.

7.2. Summary

In chapter 1 of this thesis, I introduce the long and varied history, and complex dynamics, of open-air preaching, the core practice under exploration. In this way, I challenge simplistic stereotypes of open-air preaching and define as ‘missional’ the particular expression of the practice explored in this work. In addition, continuing the introduction, and with reference to bodies of literature, which I designate as literature of ‘neglect’ and ‘advocacy’ respectively, I present my research as a study that seriously considers historical and contemporary examples of this expression of Christian preaching.

In chapter 2, I introduce the theory of performance as related to preaching. I demonstrate, through analysis, the ways in which a number of writers establish connections between preaching and the concept of performance, with respect to: the social sciences, etymology, history, Scripture, art, and theology. So understood, these

writers create the homiletical, theoretical context for understanding preaching in performance terms. I argue, however, that in a number of ways the understanding of preaching as performance, as advanced by these writers, is inadequate for understanding open-air preaching as performance. This, I contend, stems from a limited understanding on the one hand, of what constitutes preaching and on the other hand, of what constitutes artistic performance.

In chapter 3, contrary to the limitations of the understanding of preaching as performance, as discussed in chapter 2, I argue that radical street performance is a valuable way for understanding open-air preaching in performance terms. I demonstrate the ways in which the dynamics of the radical, the streets, and performance, as conceptualised in radical street performance, can be related to the practice of open-air preaching. I do this with reference to a number of examples of open-air preaching past and present. This establishes the theoretical and methodological foundations for the remainder of the research. Accordingly, in the remainder of the study, I demonstrate through the exploration of three detailed case studies, the way in which radical street performance is a constructive and illuminating way to understand and analyse open-air preaching in performance terms.

In chapter 4, I analyse James Haldane's open-air preaching as radical street performance. I demonstrate that Haldane's open-air preaching was central to a movement of evangelical renewal, in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Scotland. In part, this was on account of his success in attracting audiences and preaching in a way that made a spiritual impression on people. Such success was in keeping with his primary radical intent, to see the personal spiritual transformation of individuals. I argue, however, that the significance of Haldane's open-air preaching was also related to the socially dramatic nature of open-air -preaching, as, through the transgressive nature of the event, he contested existing ideologies. These included issues related to the nature of the gospel, the proper location for preaching, and the matter of who had a right to preach. The various reactions which such contests created ensured that the results of Haldane's preaching extended beyond his primary radical desire and contributed to the development of congregational Independency in Scotland. While it was the nature of Haldane's open-air preaching in relation to his socio-religious context that created the main drama of his preaching, I show that his

particular persona, dress, skills, style, and at times, deliberate use of theatrics, all contributed to the dynamics of his open-air preaching performance.

In chapter 5, I examine the open-air preaching of George MacLeod as radical street performance. I show, with reference to the contexts and content of MacLeod's open-air preaching, his desire to see the transformation of individuals, the church in its mission, and wider society. MacLeod's example, however, also demonstrates the way in which preaching in the democratic context of the streets, can lead to the transformation of the participants, as well as the listeners. This illustrates an expression of the transcendent nature of the radical, as understood in radical street performance. I argue, that motivated by a strongly incarnational theology, both the fact of MacLeod's open-air preaching and its content were an expression of his desire to contest the ideological separation between the spiritual and the material. I also demonstrate the ways in which MacLeod, in his open-air preaching performances, deliberately made use of religious symbols and theatrics, in order to gather audiences and gain a hearing for the Christian message. This was particularly the case with MacLeod's open-air preaching, associated with the wider life and activity of Govan Old Parish Church.

In chapter 6, I analyse the open-air preaching of OAC GB as radical street performance. I show that their primary radical concern is to see people come to a declared personal faith in Jesus Christ, through the experience of evangelical conversion. I discuss the difficulties of measuring the efficacy of open-air preaching, in relation to such an intent but indicate a number of ways in which OAC GB preaching can be regarded as having some success in 'reaching the unreached'. In addition to this, I argue that in relation to the reactions they provoke, their relationship to church practice, and the impact that it has on the participants, the impact of their open-air preaching exceeds their primary intent. Following on from this, I argue that while OAC GB open-air preachers eschew social and political controversy, as a distraction to their primary spiritual concern, the fact of their preaching in the streets as ideologically committed performers, necessarily involves them in contest and competition for the attention of people. I consider the way in which OAC GB preachers do this by entering the space of art and entertainment in the streets, through the presentation of themselves as street artists and entertainers. I

discuss the dynamics of this aspect of their performance, as street art and entertainment, indicating the complexity of what they do and the difficulties and weaknesses in their practice. I also consider the significance of the part that other OAC GB team members play in the totality of the OAC GB open-air preaching event and the ethical issues which this raises.

7.3. Conclusions

In the light of the discussions of chapters 1-6, summarised above and with particular attention to the analysis of the case studies, a number of conclusions can be drawn concerning open-air preaching, understood as radical street performance. I draw these conclusions, with reference to the theory, theology, and practice of open-air preaching, so understood. I also suggest areas for possible further research into open-air preaching as radical street performance.

7.3.1. Theory

The primary theoretical conclusion, in relation to this research, is that radical street performance is an applicable and valuable way for analysing the Christian practice of open-air preaching. Open-air preachers are ideologically committed performers, who go to the public space of the open-air. In so doing, they seek through their intentional and expressive acts of showing doing, to gather an audience and secure an ideological transaction with those who may not otherwise have contact with or be aware of their message. This is the essential nature of both missional open-air preaching and other radical street performances. Accordingly, the concepts of the radical, the streets, and performance, understood with reference to the theory of radical street performance, offer suitable ways for exploring open-air preaching in performance terms.

Following on from the above, analysing open-air preaching as radical street performance illuminates in a number of ways the dynamics of this expression of

Christian preaching. One of the ways it does this is to highlight how the changes brought about by open-air preaching can transcend the radical intent of the preachers, as a consequence of its transgressing the conventions associated with in-church preaching. Accordingly, beyond the impact which it made on people's lives, Haldane's open-air preaching contributed to the emergence of congregational Independency in Scotland. This was a result of the positive and negative reactions provoked, and responses created, among his wider audiences, by the unconventional nature of his preaching. In MacLeod's case, he was challenged by the gospel even as he preached the gospel. This occurred through a question posed, as part of the democratic nature of his street preaching performance. In turn, whatever its impact on others, OAC GB preachers and team members indicate their own experience of new courage and skills, through their participation in the challenging nature of open-air preaching. The theory of radical street performance, as applied to open-air preaching, therefore, highlights the transcendent consequences of such preaching resulting from its transgressive nature.

Another way the analysis of open-air preaching as radical street performance illuminates the dynamics of open-air preaching is to accentuate the character of open-air preaching as an act of ideological contest. This contest can vary in nature. It can also take place simultaneously at a number of levels. Haldane contested primarily for his understanding of the gospel over and against what he considered to be ignorance and false teaching. This religious contest, however, also had social and political significance, as itinerant open-air preaching, carried out by a lay person, challenged existing ideas and practices. In contrast to Haldane, MacLeod through his open-air preaching explicitly engaged in social and political disputation. This, however, was part of a wider religious concern, to assert a holistic understanding of the gospel against both political and religious claims that separated the material from the spiritual. In turn, while intentionally seeking to avoid preaching on contentious issues, OAC GB preachers, through their public preaching in post-Christian pluralistic Britain, contest the silence and defy the absence of Christian convictions publicly expressed in the streets. From the perspective of radical street performance, therefore, open-air preaching emerges as a practice that engages in ideological contest in a variety of different ways.

A further way in which exploring open-air preaching as radical street performance illuminates the dynamics of this expression of Christian preaching, is by drawing attention to the nature of its performance, as that which involves the convergence of human social drama and intentional theatrics. The dramatic novelty of Haldane, the aristocratic, former sea Captain, preaching in the open-air, was heightened, as he employed the town ringer to announce his forthcoming sermon with a bell.

MacLeod, the parish minister, directly opposed Communists through open-air disputation, oratory being a familiar feature of Govan street life. He also, however, matched the parades and symbols of the Communists with staged religious parades and symbols of his own. OAC GB non-ordained street preachers preach where many ordained church preachers will not. They do so, however, as artists painting pictures and entertainers performing tricks, to create interest and reveal the gospel. So understood, the preaching analysed in the case studies comes into view as an embodied oral/aural ideologically committed act, where activism and art, albeit street art, meet. As demonstrated in the case studies, therefore, radical street performance, as well as being a suitable approach for understanding open-air preaching, is also an illuminating approach in these areas of its radical transcendence, street contest, and the convergence of life and art in performance.

In addition, my research also indicates, radical street performance is a versatile and constructive theory for understanding open-air preaching in performance terms. The case studies are from three different historical periods. The nature of the source material for each is different. With the exception of OAC GB, no full open-air sermon scripts or transcripts were available. This has limited what could be said about the specific content and style of the preaching. This notwithstanding, I have shown how applying this analytical approach, which focuses on the event in all of its performance dimensions, allows information to be gathered and analysis given. One direct consequence of this research, therefore, is to provide informative and original analysis of the dynamics of three largely ignored expressions of open-air preaching.

To argue that radical street performance is a valuable, illuminative, and constructive way for understanding this expression of Christian preaching is not to claim that all open-air preaching is a 'good' performance or an efficient way for communicating the gospel. It does not mean that open-air preaching is free from valid critique as to

its content, style, and effectiveness. It is rather to contend that this is a way of analysing and understanding the event of open-air preaching in performance terms. Be this as it may, my detailed analysis has been confined to only three case studies. Although they represent varied expressions of open-air preaching, they are a limited selection. One area for further research, therefore, is the exploration of other examples of open-air preaching according to this theoretical approach. These examples could be chosen in order to introduce additional variables such as with respect to gender, in that all three case studies discussed in this work focus on male preachers. Such research would on the one hand, continue to test the applicability of this understanding of open-air preaching and on the other, provide original insights into further examples of this genre of preaching.

7.3.2. Theology

In terms of theological conclusions, the examples of open-air preaching explored in this research represent a variety of theological positions. This is the case, not least, with respect to their understanding of the gospel and the nature of salvation. This confirms the claims made in the general discussion of chapter 1, that the practice of open-air preaching is not the necessary preserve of any one particular theological perspective. Be this as it may, the different examples considered in the case studies shared two theological emphases. The first was a biblically informed theological commitment to the missional responsibility of the church. The second, although variously understood, was an emphasis on the significance of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. For Haldane and OAC GB, the significance of the cross relates in particular to the centrality of the atonement in securing personal salvation. Since nothing less than eternal salvation is perceived to be at stake, this compels the proclamation of a cross centred message of personal salvation to all peoples everywhere. MacLeod, however, brings a different symbolic perspective. He highlights the significance of where the cross was physically situated. This was not in a sanctuary but outside in the world. Accordingly, MacLeod uses the event of the cross, not simply as a concept related to the atonement but as a concrete example of where Christian discipleship and practice, including preaching, should be enacted.

In addition to the above, two other theological ideas emerge from the research as particularly pertinent to understanding open-air preaching. The first of these is the doctrine of the incarnation. As discussed in chapter 2, the preaching as performance writers emphasise this doctrine. It resonates with the prominence which they give to the embodied nature of preaching. Such an embodied incarnational understanding is also relevant to open-air preaching. More than this, however, as discussed in the case study of MacLeod, the doctrine of the incarnation, is a doctrine which has significance with respect to where preaching physically occurs and the content of it. Whereas, therefore, the preaching as performance writers argue for an incarnational understanding of preaching that occurs in the context of a congregation gathered in worship, Macleod applies this idea to preaching which occurs not simply conceptually but physically in the 'market place'. Given the missional motivation for the open-air preaching discussed in this thesis, the physical locations in which it occurs, and the attendant risks and challenges which such entails, the doctrine of the incarnation appears to be a particularly appropriate theological way for understanding the nature of the performance.

Following on from the above, a second theological concept that emerges as particularly relevant to the practice of open-air preaching as radical street performance, is 'witness'. As noted in the research, witness is used by Cohen-Cruz as a descriptor for radical street performances. As acknowledged in her work, it is applied with reference to its Christian roots, mediated through the practice of the Quakers. It is also the term that Erdman uses, with reference to the notion of martyr, to describe the nature of street preaching. With respect to theologically understanding open-air preaching as radical street performance, therefore, witness offers a shared term between radical street performers and open-air preachers. In turn, this language of witness, freighted with theological and performance connections, is suitably descriptive of the acts and actions of Haldane, MacLeod, and OAC GB. These preachers, through embodied orality, seek to bear witness to the embodied reality of Jesus Christ. They actively make known through their words and actions that which may otherwise remain silent or hidden. In addition, they do this in the contested space of the streets, which involves a willingness to face actual opposition and harm. It can of course be argued that open-air preachers can be bad witnesses to Jesus Christ, as well as good witnesses. This is not denied. The primary

point, here, however, is that from the analysis of the case studies, witness appears a particularly apposite term for describing the incarnational, cross-centred, embodied open-air preaching of Haldane, MacLeod, and OAC GB.

While the above theological ideas emerge from the research, the theological understanding of open-air preaching, as radical street performance, is an area that would benefit from further systematic consideration and elucidation. One significant question, which emerges, is pertinent particularly to contemporary expressions of open-air preaching. This is the question as to the nature of the theological understanding of the power and efficacy of the Word preached, when it is so, apart from any supporting conventions and among audiences who may attribute to it no prior authority as sacred Scripture.

7.3.3. Practice

In addition to theoretical and theological conclusions, a number of practical conclusions can also be drawn with respect to this expression of Christian preaching understood as radical street performance. First, the detailed examination of the three case studies confirms the general claims made in chapter 1, that open-air preaching is a varied and dynamically complex practice. The preaching in all three case studies, as stated, is motivated by a missional concern. Beyond this, however, they demonstrate differences with respect to the status of the preachers, the specific locations used, the purpose and content of the preaching, their use or not of acts of worship, their style, theology, and the personality of the preachers. In turn, it is the combination of these variants, in relation to their wider socio-religious contexts that creates the particular nature and significance of each distinct open-air preaching event. The analysis demonstrates the intricacy of each event and the variety between them. As demonstrated, therefore, the practice of open-air preaching is varied in its performance nature.

Second, open-air preaching can gather audiences and secure varying degrees of change, in keeping with the radical intent of the performers. As evidenced by OAC

GB, this is still the case in the contemporary situation. This conclusion, however, requires several important qualifications. Measuring the efficacy of open-air preaching is not always easy. This relates to the performance nature of open-air preaching. It is also a consequence of the, sometimes, somewhat ethereal character of the intents. Open-air preaching may simply play a part in wider religious and cultural movements and activities. At times, open-air preachers have to be content with nothing more than the success of having borne witness to their position. Moreover, the size of audiences which open-air preaching is likely to attract and its attendant obvious impact appears directly related to the wider socio-religious context. This context includes the familiarity and acceptability to listeners of preaching as a valid genre of communication. Haldane attracted large audiences, often in their thousands, when Scotland was a religious culture and people were familiar with the genre of the sermon. MacLeod on occasion, attracted substantial audiences, often in their hundreds, in a socio-religious context where the church still had considerable cultural capital and oratory in the open-air was a regular feature of public discourse. Contemporary open-air preaching attracts much smaller audiences and makes more restrained claims, in post-Christian pluralistic British culture, where the genre of preaching, when not unfamiliar may be resented. These qualifications do not constitute an argument against open-air preaching, in the contemporary socio-religious context. They do, however, suggest a need for realism both on the part of advocates and opponents, as to what can be achieved.

Third, in seeking to gather listeners and negotiate a hearing for their message in the open-air preachers have to contend simultaneously with a variety of audiences. In relation to the transient nature of the street, potential audiences range from those who stop and gather, through those who overhear while passing-by, to those to whom the event is mediated in some other way. Among all such groups will be a variety of opinions, positive and negative, as to what is being said and done. Open-air preachers may choose to contend with present or distant potential audiences, in order to gather and gain a sympathetic hearing from others. Such a practice is apparent both in the open-air preaching of Haldane, with respect to Moderate ministers, and in the open-air preaching of MacLeod, in his contesting with Communists on street corners. Conflict may actually draw an audience and become part of the performance. This is something that preachers can use. This was the case in some of

MacLeod's open-air preaching where heckling did not simply happen but questions were encouraged. On this matter of the relationship with audiences, the open-air preaching of OAC GB highlights a particular difficulty in evangelistic preaching. On the one hand, in order not to distract from their central message, OAC GB open-air preachers avoid conflictual contexts and do not encourage heckling. On the other hand, however, the audiences that they gather are the very people, who are implicitly or explicitly criticised as the sermon progresses, in terms of their needing salvation. Subsequently, the ability of the OAC GB preachers, to come across as friendly and hold attention, and interest, through other aspects of their preaching performance, becomes critical. In the democratically open context of the streets, therefore, open-air preachers need to make choices and decisions, about how they will navigate the complex relationship with potential audiences, to the maximum benefit of their radical intents.

Fourth, the participation of other supportive performers can enhance the event. In all of the examples I explored, those who participated in open-air preaching had a concern to see reform and renewal in the life of the church. This is particularly so with respect to its missional activity. The practice of open-air preaching was regarded as one way of bringing this about. The actual relationship of the preachers considered, to dominant church authorities, varied. Haldane was a layman who seceded from the Established Church. MacLeod was a prominent if controversial minister in the Church of Scotland. OAC GB is a para-church organisation whose preachers are primarily lay-people. The complicated relationships, evidenced in the examples considered, between the open-air preachers and the regular practices and conventions of the church, are in keeping with the general discussion of open-air preaching given in chapter 1. This notwithstanding, all of the examples I explored involved preachers who benefited from the support and participation of the wider Christian community. Haldane was often accompanied on his preaching tours by other preachers. He also had the wider encouragement of at least some other evangelical Christians. Macleod benefited from preaching regularly in a locality where he and his congregation were known to be actively involved in the community, in a wide range of ways. During his 'Mission of Friendship', open-air preaching was embedded in a programme of wider congregational activity. OAC GB open-air preachers have the support of local churches, the organisation, and in the

preaching event, their teams. Despite, therefore, the ambiguous relationship that open-air preachers can have with dominant church authorities and regular church practices, the activity need not occur apart from wider communal support.

Fifth, an important practical feature of this expression of Christian preaching is the use preachers make of the physical location where the preaching is staged. OAC GB has a very pragmatic attitude towards the particular locations in which they stage their open-air preaching. They choose locations in which preachers can be seen and heard, and people are likely to be able to gather without causing obstruction. Haldane's earlier example, however, demonstrates the potential for a much more conflictual use of space. In such an approach, preaching takes place physically in or near the source of the ideas and ideologies being challenged. This is one way in which open-air preachers concretise the ideological contest in which they are involved. This adds to its dramatic nature. It has the potential to give a conservative message a socio-political significance. This is not least the case if matters of legality are directly raised through the locations chosen for the staging of the preaching performance. As discussed, this was again the situation with some of Haldane's open-air preaching. Moreover, as indicated primarily by MacLeod's activity, the symbolic meanings associated with a particular location can also become significant in relation to the message being preached.

In addition to the above, particular locations can have certain types of performances associated with them. These performances can be of a commercial, political, social, entertainment, or religious nature. This establishes these places as particular types of performance contexts, performance spaces. Subsequently, the association of locations with particular types of performances can impact the reception which is given to open-air preaching when it is performed in them. Accordingly, the association of open-air, in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century Scotland, with rebellious political activity, gave Haldane's open-air preaching a novel and seditious quality. In contrast, MacLeod's open-air preaching, while lacking the novelty of Haldane's, had the benefits of the early to mid-twentieth century streets of Govan, being a location where political and religious public discourse regularly took place. For OAC GB open-air preachers, in early twenty-first century Britain, the streets, such as those in Glasgow, provide a location where a variety of performances take

place. As a consequence, they seek to gather an audience and gain a hearing not in the contentious space that political performances create, nor in the negative religious space associated with other street preachers but in the space of entertainment and art. The specific locations where open-air preaching takes place, therefore, and the way in which the preachers respond to such, play an important part in determining the nature and significance of the event.

Sixth, the research indicates that another important feature in open-air preaching, understood as radical street performance, is the persona of the preacher. Both Haldane and MacLeod had strong preaching personas. These personas were created in large part by their wider reputations and social status. Haldane was the 'Captain' even when preaching. MacLeod was 'the minister' even when addressing a socio-political issue. These personas, however, had a theatrical dimension in their social drama. This was reinforced and cultivated, whether deliberately or not, through dress, style, deportment, demonstrated behaviour, and what they said. The strength and nature of these personas were part of their appeal, their attraction, and their embodied performances. OAC GB preachers, in a different way, also demonstrate the importance of persona. Accordingly, they deliberately adopt the persona of street artists in order to overcome the negative perception of and reactions to street preachers.

The persona of the preacher as performer, however, relates not simply to the physical and demographic characteristics of the preachers but also to their psychological qualities, particularly as these come across to their audiences through the preaching event. Haldane, at least for some, through his commitment to the message and personal appeals, came across as one genuinely concerned for his listeners. The evidence also suggests that MacLeod was regarded as a person who was on the side of ordinary people. He appears to have maintained good relationships even with some of the Communists whose views he openly disputed. OAC GB open-air preachers, for their part, seek not to come across as personally offensive in style and expression, even although they recognise that people may find their message offensive in its content. The persona of the open-air preacher, therefore, in terms of prior reputation, outward representation, and expressed character, is an important feature as they seek to gather audiences and gain a hearing for their message.

Seventh and finally, to be done well, open-air preaching requires a range of competencies from the preachers. Haldane and MacLeod both appear to have had considerable confidence, ability, and skills, related to preaching in the open-air. OAC GB preachers are much more varied in background and experience. Be this as it may, observation indicates that the more experienced and skilled OAC GB preachers are the most successful in terms of moving towards their radical intents. Drawing from the research and the conclusions, it appears in terms of competencies that open-air preachers require attitudes that can accommodate arrogance and bravery, confidence and humility, and optimism and reality. In addition, they require the abilities to present themselves in the open-air, loud enough to be heard without shouting, concise and clear in what they are saying, compelling and appealing, confident in the subject matters that they are dealing with, and relevant and interesting, in content and presentation. The ability to be creative and improvisational, in relation to specific location and audiences also appears to be a necessary quality.

The above practical conclusions with respect to open-air preaching are drawn through an analysis of the case studies, with reference to the theory of radical street performance. This analysis, however, is my interpretation of the preaching. This being the case, an area for further research would be experiments in various expressions of open-air preaching, carried out intentionally as radical street performances, with reference to the dynamics and practical conclusions indicated in this work. Such experiments could be undertaken, with pre-determined means of measuring audience responses and reactions, in relation to the radical intent of the particular activity. This would test whether this understanding is not only a valuable, illuminative, and constructive way for analysing open-air preaching events but also whether it can inform the successful staging of them.

7.4. Implications for In-Church Preaching

The focus of this research is on the largely neglected practice of open-air preaching. One reason for this neglect is that it is a minority practice, in-church preaching being the dominant expression of preaching in the Global North. In terms of the

relationship between these different genres of preaching, I have argued in this research that open-air preaching, in a number of ways, functions as an irregular practice outwith the conventions associated with in-church preaching. As a consequence this, the practice of open-air preaching exists in a tense relationship with in-church preaching. Historically, this helps explain the association of open-air preaching with times of revival and renewal. Recognising this tense relationship, I now indicate a number of the implications of this research, for in-church preaching.

First, by providing an example of an alternative historic genre of Christian preaching, open-air preaching accentuates the nature, strengths, and limitations of the theories, theologies, and practice of in-church preaching. Open-air preaching indicates that in-church preaching is not preaching *de-facto* but a particular expression of Christian preaching. Understood in this way, as I have demonstrated, the performance of in-church preaching can be seen to be inextricably intertwined with the associated conventions of congregations, liturgical contexts, and buildings. In turn, as I have argued, the attendant theories and theologies of in-church preaching are often developed dependant upon these conventions. The strength of this is that it allows the development of preaching as a liturgical act and genre of communication, in relation to these contexts. The weakness, however, is that unless highlighted, the influence of these conventions on the developed theories and theologies of preaching may go unproblematised, in terms of their applicability to preaching, which occurs in other contexts and among different listeners. The serious consideration of open-air preaching, therefore, which operates outwith the conventions of in-church preaching, highlights the existence and influence of such conventions on the practice, theory, and theology of in-church preaching. This allows their relativity to be recognised and their nature to be both positively and negatively critiqued.

Second, the practice of open-air preaching, understood as radical street performance, can be practically instructive for in-church preaching. As argued throughout this thesis, a congregation assembled in worship in a building is different from a random audience which requires to be gathered in the streets. The nature of this difference has been emphasised. Be this as it may, despite the implication in some of the literature, church congregations are not homogenous units of attendant listeners ready to engage with the sermon, in accordance with the theology and theories held

by the preacher. Rather, congregations are composed of disparate people who are variously part of other communities and wider contemporary culture. In turn, while preaching may function as a familiar genre of communication within the liturgical context, it is not the only form of communication that congregants will be familiar with. Nor may it be one that they necessarily find most helpful. Following on from this, while preachers within the context of the liturgy have established roles, this by no means guarantees the way in which they play that role, or the persona they convey, will gain active listening. To be sure, there may be a valid resistance to preaching and worship becoming mere entertainment. Conversely, however, outside church, people may be used to receiving information and inspiration in ways that are not without at least attraction and interest. In-church preachers, therefore, despite the theological understandings that may be associated with preaching in worship are not immune from the challenges of seeking to gather listeners and gain a hearing, albeit from among members of the congregation gathered in worship. This being the case, some of the experience, skills, and insights, necessary in open-air preaching, for attracting attention, gaining interest, and communicating faith convictions, may have practical significance for in-church preaching.

Third, open-air preaching, understood as radical street performance, can encourage the development and experimentation of more transgressive, more democratically open, and more conflictual forms of preaching. This would involve giving serious attention to the public nature, missional emphasis, listener relationship, style, and particular locations used. A mediating position between open-air and in-church preaching, could be preaching that intentionally takes place in indoor venues and contexts, other than church buildings and the event of worship. The nature of these venues and the particular occasions, whether pre-determined by others or set by the preachers, could determine the character of the preaching, in relation to that performance space. Accordingly, the preaching could be expressed as religious, socio-political, or artistic discourse, or indeed as a hybrid form of these types, as appropriate to the particular location and context. To suggest such an implication of open-air preaching for in-church preaching has historical precedent as indicated in the research. During the 'Week of Friendship' in Govan in 1934, there was an event called 'Street-Preaching Under Cover', which took place in the nearby Pearce

Institute. It took place following the church services and involved questions and answers, in a context different from the preceding worship service.

A final implication of this research, for in-church preaching, is to indicate the further potential for exploring in-church preaching, in relation to specific and alternative performance approaches. The preaching as performance writers have established the general homiletical, theoretical context, for understanding preaching in performance terms. The understanding which these writers articulate of artistic performances is in many ways appropriate to the particular expression of preaching which they postulate. As indicated in this research, however, not only are their other types of preaching but there are also other types of artistic performances than those emphasised by the preaching as performance writers. These include not only radical street performance, the concern of this study, but also alternative understandings of in-building performances. Exploring in-church preaching in relation to some of these more specific and alternative in-building performance forms, such as the previously mentioned 'rough theatre' and 'community based theatre', has the potential for developing the understanding and practice of in-church preaching as performance, in new directions not yet explored.

7.5. Final Summation

Missional open-air preaching, understood as radical street performance, is an event which takes place in the contested reality of the streets as preachers with a radical intent seek to gather an audience and gain a hearing, through their activities of showing doing. Theologically, as they physically place their bodies outside the supporting conventions of church buildings and worship, it is an act of incarnational witness. Whether or not such preaching is effective relates to matters of its radical intent and subsequently the preachers' abilities in gaining an audience and negotiating a hearing for their message. This has to be achieved with reference to issues, not only of the wider socio-religious context but also of the more immediate performance matters of location, support, persona, relationship with audience, style, and appropriate skills. Operating outside the context and conventions of in-church

preaching, open-air preaching is a minority practice that exists in a tense relationship with in-church preaching. Be this as it may, its significance in relation to in-church preaching is that it exposes the controlling conventions of the practice in relation to which theories and theologies of preaching are formulated, while encouraging development in more public and alternative performance forms. Exploring open-air preaching as radical street performance, therefore, at least as defined, discussed and formulated in chapters 1-3 and as applied to the case studies in chapters 4-6, proves to be a valuable, illuminating, and constructive way for understanding this expression of Christian preaching.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Published Works

- Achtemeier, Elizabeth, *Preaching as Theology and Art* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984)
- Acts of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1638-1842* (Edinburgh: The Edinburgh Printing and Publishing House, 1843)
- Aldridge, Marion D., 'George Whitefield: The Necessary Interdependence of Preaching Style and Content to Effect Revival', *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 23:1 (1980), 55-64
- Allan, Tom, *The Congregational Group in Action* (Glasgow: Tell Scotland, 1955)
- Alling, Roger, and David J. Schlafer, eds., *Preaching Through Holy Days and Holidays: Sermons that Work XI* (Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2003)
- An Account of the Proceedings of the Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1799)
- Anderson, H., *The Life and Letters of Christopher Anderson* (Edinburgh: William P. Kennedy, 1854)
- Apple, J., 'Art at the Barricades: Performance Art as a Means to Community Not Commodity' *Artweek*, 21 (1990), 21-22
- Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, trans. by W. Rhys Roberts (Mineola: Dover Publications, 2004)
- Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, trans. by H. Bettenson (Harmondsworth: Pelican, 1972)
- Austin, J. L., *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962)
- Balthasar, Hans Urs Von, *Theo-Drama: Theological Dramatic Theory*, vol. 1, 'Prologomena', trans. by Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988=1983)
- Barton, Stephen C., 'New Testament Interpretation As Performance', in *Scottish Journal of Theology*, 52:2 (1999), 179-208
- Bartow, Charles L., *The Preaching Moment* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1980)
- Bartow, Charles L., *God's Human Speech: A Practical Theology of Proclamation* (Wm. B. Eerdmans: Cambridge, 1997)
- Beattie, James, *The Haldanes: A Lecture Delivered in Melbourne in February 1880* (Edinburgh: Andrew Elliot, 1880)
- Bebbington, D.W., ed., *The Baptists in Scotland: A History* (Glasgow: The Baptist Union of Scotland, 1988)

- Biggs, Brooke Shelby, *Brave Hearts Rebel Spirits: Spiritual Activists Handbook* (Chichester: Anita Roddick Publications, 2003)
- Billy, Reverend, *What Would Jesus Buy: Fabulous Prayers in the Face of the Shopocalypse* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006)
- Blaikie, William Garden, *The Preachers of Scotland: From the Sixth to the Nineteenth Century* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1888)
- Bliss, James, *The Works of William Laud*, vol. 4 (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1854)
- Boal, Augusto, *Theater of the Oppressed*, new edn, trans. by Charles A. and Maria-Odilia Leal McBride and Emily Fryer (London: Pluto Press, 2000)
- Bogad, L.M., *Electoral Guerrilla Theatre: Radical Ridicule and Social Movements* (New York: Routledge, 2005)
- Bozarth-Campbell, Alla, *The Word's Body: An Incarnational Aesthetic of Interpretation* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1979)
- Bradley, Gerald H., *Evangelistic Sketchboard Sermons* (Nazareth PA: OAC [n.d.])
- Braunstein, Peter, and Michael William Doyle, *Imagine Nation: The American Counterculture of the 1960s and '70s* (London: Routledge, 2002)
- Bremer, Francis, and Ellen Rydell 'Performance Art? Puritans in the Pulpit', *History Today*, 45:9 (1995), 50-54
- Brilioth, Yngve, *A Brief History of Preaching*, trans. Karl E. Mattson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965)
- Broadhurst, S., *Liminal Acts: A Critical Overview of Contemporary Performance and Theory* (London: Cassell, 1999)
- Brook, Peter, *The Empty Space* (London: Penguin Books, 1968)
- Brown, Callum, G., *Religion and Society in Scotland Since 1707* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997)
- Brown, Callum, G., *The Death of Christian Britain: Understanding Secularisation, 1800-2000* (London: Routledge, 2001)
- Brown, Callum, G., *Religion and Society in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Edinburgh: Pearson, 2006)
- Brown, John, *Remarks on Certain Statements by Alexander Haldane, Esq., of the Inner Temple Barrister-at-Law in his "Memoirs of Robert Haldane of Airthrey, and His Brother Robert, James A. Haldane"* (Edinburgh: William Oliphant and Sons, 1852)
- Bruch, Debra, 'The Prejudice Against Theatre', *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 3:1 (2004), 1-18, http://rtjournal/vol_3/no_1/bruch.html, accessed 17/10/07
- Brummitt, Mark, 'Of Broken Pots and Dirty Laundry: The Jeremiah Lehrstüke', *The Bible and Critical Theory*, 2:1 (2006), 3.1-3.10
- Bryman, Alan, *Social Research Methods*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

- Burghardt, Walter J., *Preaching: The Art and the Craft* (New York: Paulist Press, 1987)
- Butler, Dugald, *John Wesley and George Whitefield In Scotland: The Influence of the Oxford Methodists on Scottish Religion* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1898)
- Buttrick, David., *Homiletic: Moves and Structures* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1987)
- Buttrick, David, *A Captive Voice: The Liberation of Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994)
- Campbell, Charles L., 'Performing the Scriptures: Preaching and Jesus' "Third Way"', *Journal for Preachers*, 17:2 (1994), 18-24.
- Campbell, Charles L., *Preaching Jesus: New Directions for Homiletics in Hans Frei's Postliberal Theology* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997)
- Campbell, Charles L., *The Word Before the Powers: An Ethic of Preaching* (London: Westminster: John Knox Press, 2002)
- Campbell, Charles L., 'The Preacher as Ridiculous Person: Naked Street Preaching and Homiletical Foolishness', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2007), 149-158
- Campbell, Charles L., 'Principalities, Powers, and Fools Does Preaching Make an Ethical Difference, Homiletic, 33:2 (2008),
<http://www.homiletic.net/viewarticle.php?id=6&layout=abstract>, accessed, 16/2/09
- Campbell, Charles L., and Clayton H. Hulet, 'Moments of Inspiration: Preaching Jazz, Improvisation, and the Work of the Spirit', *Journal for Preachers*, 21:4 (1998), 30-35
- Campbell, John, ed., *Services at the Centenary Celebration of Whitefield's Apostolic Labours, held in The Tabernacle, Moorfields, May 21st, 1839: With Introductory Observations on Open-air Preaching* (London: John Snow, 1839)
- Campbell, Ted A., *The Religion of the Heart: A Study of European Religious Life in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 1991)
- Carlson, Marvin, *Performance: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2004)
- Childers, Jana, *Performing the Word: Preaching as Theatre* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998)
- Childers, Jana, ed., *Purposes of Preaching*, (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2004)
- Childers, Jana, 'Making Connections: Preaching as Theatre', *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 4 (2005), 1-7,
http://www.rtjournal.org/vol_4/no_1/childers.html, accessed 25/10/07
- Childers, Jana, and J. Schmit, eds., *Performance in Preaching: Bringing the Sermon to Life* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008)

- Clancy, Dawn, *Child's Play: Sketchboard Talks* (Suffolk: Kevin Mayhew, 2004)
- Clark, Neville, *Preaching in Context: Word, Worship and the People of God* (Suffolk: Kevin Mayhew, 1991)
- Cockrem, Frank, *The Open-Air Preacher's Counsellor: A Handbook to Highway Witnessing*, 4th edn (London: Morgan and Scott, 1912)
- Cohen, David, and Ben Greenwood, *The Buskers: A History of Street Entertainment* (London: David and Charles, 1981)
- Cohen-Cruz, Jan, ed., *Radical Street Performance: An International Anthology*, (London: Routledge, 1998)
- Cohen-Cruz, Jan, 'Motion of the Ocean: The Shifting Face of U.S. Theater for Social Change since the 1960's', *Theater*, 31:3 (2001), 95-107.
- Cohen-Cruz, Jan, *Local Acts: Community Based Performance in the United States* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2005)
- Coggan, Donald., *The Sacrament of the Word* (London: Fount Paperbacks 1987)
- Coult, Tony, and Baz Kershaw, eds., *Engineers of the Imagination: The Welfare State Handbook*, rev. edn (London: Methuen, 1990)
- Counsell, Colin, and Laurie Wolf, eds., *Performance Analysis: An Introductory Coursebook* (London: Routledge, 2001)
- Craddock, Fred B., *As One Without Authority*, rev. edn (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2001)
- Craig-Snell, Shannon, 'Command Performance: Rethinking Performance Interpretation in the Context of *Divine Discourse*', *Modern Theology* 16:4 (2000), 475-494
- Craske, James V., *A Woman's Perspective on Preaching*, The Preacher's Library, vol. 5 (Peterborough: Foundry Press 2001)
- Darby, Harold S., *Hugh Latimer* (London: Epworth Press, 1953)
- Dargan, Edwin, C., *A History of Preaching: From the Apostolic Fathers to the 20th Century*, 2 vols (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1968=1904)
- Davey, Korky, *Biblical Patterns of Evangelism... To-Day* (2000), e-book, www.korky.info, accessed 27/3/09
- Davies, Horton, *Worship and Theology in England: From Watts to Wesley to Maurice, 1690-1850*, vol. 3 (Princeton : Princeton University Press, 1961)
- Day, David, *A Preaching Workbook* (London: SPCK, 1998)
- Day, David, *Embodying the Word: A Preacher's Guide* (London: SPCK, 2005)
- Day, David, Jess Astley, and Leslie J Francis, eds., *A Reader on Preaching: Making Connections* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005)
- Devine, T.M., ed., *Conflict and Stability in Scottish Society 1700-1850* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1990)
- Ding Dong Dollar: Anti-Polaris Songs* (Glasgow: Glasgow Song Guild, [n.d.])

- Doan, William, and Terry Giles, *Prophets, Performance and Power: Performance Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (London: T&T Clark, 2005)
- Duffecy, J.A., *The Truceless Warfare Advances* (Florida: Daniels Publishing, 1983)
- Dunn-Wilson, David, *A Mirror for the Church: Preaching in the First Five Centuries* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005)
- Edwards, O.C., *A History of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2004)
- English, Donald., *An Evangelical Theology of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996)
- Erdman, Chris, *Countdown to Sunday: A Daily Guide for those Who Dare to Preach* (Grand Rapids: Brazos, Press, 2007)
- Escott, Harry, *A History of Scottish Congregationalism* (Glasgow: The Congregational Union of Scotland, 1960)
- Evangelism Training Manual* (Nazareth PA: OAC [n.d.])
- Ewing, Greville, *A Defence of Itinerant and Field Preaching: A Sermon Preached Before The Society for Gratis Sabbath Schools, On the 24th of December 1799, In Lady Glenorchy's Chapel, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1799)
- Ewing, Greville, *Animadversions on Some Passages of a Pamphlet Entitled Lay-preaching Indefensible on Scripture Principles* (Glasgow: Falconer and Wilson, 1800)
- Falconner, Ronnie, *The Kilt Beneath My Cassock* (Edinburgh: Handel Press, 1978)
- Fant, Clyde E., and William M. Pinson, *20 Centuries of Great Preaching*, 12 vols (Waco: Word Books, 1971)
- Fant, Clyde E., *Preaching for Today*, rev. edn (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1987)
- Ferguson, Ron, *Chasing the Wild Goose* (Collins, 1988)
- Ferguson, Ron, *George MacLeod: Founder of the Iona Community* (London: Harper Collins, 1990)
- Ferguson, Ron, *Love Your Crooked Neighbour* (Edinburgh: St Andrew Press, 1999)
- Ford, David Nash, *Royal Berkshire History*,
<http://www.berkshirehistory.com/bios/mcoverdale.html>, accessed 02/04/2007
- Forrester, Duncan B., 'MacLeod, George Fielden Baron MacLeod of Fuinary (1895- 1991)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 35 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 804-808
- Fox, John, *Eyes on Stalks* (London: Methuen, 2002)
- Foxe, John, *Acts and Monuments*, (1570 edition) [online version],
http://www.hrionline.ac.uk/johnfoxe/main/8_1570_1225.jsp, accessed, 6/7/09
- Friesen, Laura, 'Drama and Religion: The Search for a New Paradigm', *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 4:1 (2005), 8-15,
http://www.rtjournal.org/vol_4/no_1/friesen.html, accessed 25/10/07

- Frost, Brian, *Goodwill on Fire: Donald Soper's Life and Mission* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1996)
- Galt, John, *Open-Air Preaching: What to Avoid and What to Do* (London: Partridge, 1903)
- Gaskell, Ken, *Open-Air Evangelism Today* (Cambridge: Grove, 1997).
- Galliers, Brian., *Variety in Preaching*, The Preachers Library, vol. 3 (Peterborough: Foundry Press, 2000)
- Gibson, Noel C., *The Fisherman's Basket: Open-Air and Other Methods of Evangelism* (NSW: Mission Publications, 1984);
- Gillies, John, *Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M.A.* (Salem: Cushing and Appleton, 1801)
- Gilmore, Alec, *Preaching as Theatre* (London: SCM Press, 1996)
- Goldsworthy, David, 'MacLeod, Ian Norman, (1913-1970)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 35 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 810-816
- Goodman, Lizbeth, and Jane de Gay, eds., *The Routledge Reader in Politics and Performance* (London: Routledge, 2000)
- Gospel Sermons in Paint for Children* (Surrey: OAC, 1982)
- Graves, M., *The Sermon as Symphony: Preaching the Literary Forms of the New Testament* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1997)
- Graves, Mike, ed., *What's the Matter with Preaching Today?* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004)
- Green, Roger J., *The Life and Ministry of William Booth* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005)
- Greenbank, Alan J., *The Lord's Doing: The Open-Air Mission, 1853-2003* (London: Open-Air Mission, 2003)
- Greenhaw, David M., and Ronald J. Allen, *Preaching in the Context of Worship* (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2000)
- Haldane, Alexander, *The Lives of Robert Haldane of Airthey, and of his brother, James Alexander Haldane*, 4th edn (Edinburgh: W.P. Kennedy, 1853)
- Haldane, J., *Journal of a Tour Through the Northern Counties of Scotland and the Orkney Isles, in Autumn 1779: Undertaken with a view to Promote the Knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ*, 3rd edn (Edinburgh: J. Ritchie, 1798).
- Hamilton, Thomas, 'MacLeod, Norman (1783-1862)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 35 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 829-830
- Hardison, O.B., *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages: Essays in the Origin and Early History of Modern Drama* (Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1965)

- Hattersley, Roy, *Blood and Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army* (London: Abacus, 1999)
- Hauerwas, Stanley, *Performing the Faith: Bonhoeffer and the Practice of Nonviolence* (London: SPCK, 2004)
- Harris, Max, *Theater and Incarnation* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1990)
- Harrison-Pepper, Sally, *Drawing a Circle in the Square* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1990)
- Hart, Chris, *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination* (London: Sage, 1998)
- Hart, Trevor A., and Steven R. Guthrie, eds., *Faithful Performances: Enacting Christian Tradition* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007)
- Heddon, Deirdre, and Jane Milling, *Devising Performance: A Critical History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2006)
- Holmes, Janice Evelyn, 'The Role of Open-Air Preaching in the Belfast Riots of 1857', *Proceeding of the Royal Irish Academy*, 102:3 (2002), 47-66
- Hill, Leslie, and Helen Paris, *Guerilla Performance and Multimedia* (London: Continuum, 2001)
- Hilton, Julian, *Performance: New Directions in Theatre* (London: Macmillan, 1987)
- Holdsworth, Nadine, 'Good Nights Out: Activating the Audience with 7:84 (England)', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 13:49 (1997), 29-40
- Hooke, Ruthana B., "'I am Here in this Room...': The Practice of Performance and the Learning of Preaching", *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2001), 246-253
- Hornsby, Teresa, 'Ezekiel Off-Broadway', *The Bible and Critical Theory*, 2:1 (2006), 2.1-2.8
- Howe, Mark, *Open-Air Evangelism: A Practical Handbook* (Alresford: Christian Literature Crusade, 1991)
- Hutton, William Holden, *William Laud* (London: Methuen & Co, 1895)
- Huxley, Michael, and Noel Witts, eds., *The Twentieth-Century Performance Reader* (London: Routledge, 1996)
- Jenkins, Ron, *Acrobats of the Soul: Comedy and Virtuosity in Contemporary American Theatre* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1988)
- Kennel, LeRoy E., 'Preaching as Drama/Drama as Preaching!', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2001), 225-236
- Kienzle, Beverly Mayne, and Pamela J. Walker, eds., *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity* (London: University of California Press, 1998)
- Kershaw, Baz, *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention* (London: Routledge, 1992)

- Kershaw, Baz, 'Fighting in the Streets: Dramaturgies of Popular Protest, 1968-1989' *New Theatre Quarterly*, 13:51 (1997), 255-276
- Kershaw, Baz, 'Discouraging Democracy: British Theatres and Economics, 1979-1999', *Theatre Journal*, 51:3 (1999), 267-283
- Kershaw, Baz, *The Radical in Performance: Between Brecht and Baudrillard* (London: Routledge, 1999)
- Kershaw, Baz, 'Ecoactivist Performance: The Environment as Partner in Protest?', *The Drama Review*, 46:1 (2002), 118-130
- Kershaw, Baz, *Theatre Ecology: Environments and Performance Events* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007)
- Kingsnorth, Paul, *One No, Many Yeses* (London: Free Press, 2003)
- Kinniburgh, Robert, *Fathers of Independency in Scotland* (Edinburgh: A. Fullarton & Co, 1851)
- Kirkham, Gawin, *The Open-Air Preacher's Handbook*, 2nd edn (London: Morgan and Scott, 1890)
- Knox, John, *The Masses Without* (London: Judd and Glass, 1857)
- Kushner, Tony, and others, 'How Do You Make Social Change?', *Theater*, 31:3 (2001), 62-93
- Lamb, Lisa, 'Getting in on the Act: An Evangelical Dialogue With the Performance School in Homiletics', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2005), 142-151
- Lane, Jill, 'The Reverend Billy: Preaching, Protest and Post-Industrial Flânerie', *The Drama Review*, 46:1, (2002), 60-84
- Lash, Nicholas, 'Performing the Scriptures', *Theology on the Way to Emmaus* (London: SCM Press, 1986), 37-46
- Lesnick, Henry, ed., *Guerilla Street Theatre* (New York: Avon Books, 1973)
- Lewis, Donald M., *Lighten Their Darkness: The Evangelical Mission to Working-Class London, 1828-1860* (London: Greenwood Press, 1986)
- Lindsay, William, and others, *Religious Life in Scotland: From the Reformation to the Present Day* (Edinburgh: T. Nelson and Sons, 1888)
- Lischer, Richard, 'Martin Luther King, Jr.: "Performing" the Scriptures', *Anglican Theological Review*, 77:2 (1995), 160-172
- Lischer, Richard, ed., *The Company of Preachers: Wisdom on Preaching Augustine to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2002)
- Lischer, Richard, *The End of Words: The Language of Reconciliation in a Culture of Violence* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2005)
- Lloyd-Jones, Martyn, *Preaching and Preachers* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971)
- Long, Thomas G., *The Witness of Preaching*, 2nd edn (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2005)

- Lovegrove, Deryck, 'Particular Baptist Itinerant Preachers During the Late 18th and Early 19th Centuries', *The Baptist Quarterly*, 28:3 (1979), 127-141
- Lovegrove, Deryck, "'A set of men whose proceedings threaten no small disorder": The Society for Propagating the Gospel at Home, 1798-1808', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 79:1 (2000), 61-81
- Low, Setha M., and Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga, eds., *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1988)
- MacDonald, Alan, Steve Stickley, and Philip Hawthorn, *Street Theatre: Performing Outdoors For Any Occasion* (Eastbourne: Minstrel, 1991)
- MacGregor, John, *Go Out Quickly* (London: Blackburn and Burt, 1855)
- MacKay, John, *The Church in the Highlands* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1914)
- MacLeod, Donald, *The Problem of Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987)
- MacLeod, George F., *Govan Calling* (London: Methuen, 1934)
- MacLeod, George F., *Are Not the Churchless Millions Partly the Church's Fault?* (Edinburgh: Morrison and Gibb, 1936)
- MacLeod, George F., *Speaking the Truth - In Love* (London: SCM, 1936)
- MacLeod, George F., *We Shall Rebuild* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1944)
- MacLeod, George F., *Four Men and Our Faith: Five Addresses Broadcast from Iona Abbey, August 1953* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1953)
- MacLeod, George F., 'Evangelism: A New Experiment', *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 10:3 (1955), 11-17
- MacLeod, George F., *Only One Way Left* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1956)
- MacLeod, George F., *Bombs and Bishops* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1957)
- MacLeod, George F., *John Knox and Today* (Geneva: John Knox House Association, 1959)
- MacLeod, George F., 'George MacLeod', *Scottish Field* (July 1959), 25-27 and 65
- MacLeod, George F., *The Idea Whose Hour is Come* (Glasgow: N.B.T, 1965)
- MacLeod, George F., 'Postscript to Chapter Five of Only One Way Left', *Theological Education*, 1:2 (1965), 81-82
- MacLeod, George F., *The Whole Earth Shall Cry Glory* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 1985)
- Maier, Christopher T., *Preaching the Crusades: The Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994)
- Martin, Bradford D., *The Theatre Is In The Streets: Politics and Performance in Sixties America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2004)
- Mason, Bim, *Street Theatre: And Other Outdoor Performance* (London: Routledge, 1992)

- Matthews, Alice, P., *Preaching That Speaks to Women* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003)
- McClure, John S., *The Four Codes: Rhetorical Strategies* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003=1991)
- McClure, John S., *The Roundtable Pulpit: Where Leadership and Preaching Meet* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995)
- McClure, John S., *Other-Wise Preaching: A Postmodern Ethic for Homiletics* (Missouri: Chalice Press, 2001)
- McClure, John S., *Preaching Words: 144 Key Terms in Homiletics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007)
- McClure, Millar, *The Paul's Cross Sermons 1534-1642* (London: Oxford University Press, 1958)
- McKay, George, *Senseless Acts of Beauty: Cultures of Resistance Since the Sixties* (London: Verso, 1996)
- McLaren, Brian D., *More Ready Than You Realise: The Power of Everyday Conversations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002)
- McNaughton, William D., *Early Congregational Independency in the Highlands and Islands and the North East of Scotland* (Tiree: Trustees of Ruaig Congregational Church, 2003)
- McNaughton, William D., *Early Congregational Independency in Shetland* (Lerwick: Shetland Times, 2005)
- McNaughton, William D., *Early Congregational Independency in Lowland Scotland*, vol. 1 (Glasgow: Congregational Federation in Scotland, 2005)
- McNaughton, William D., *Early Congregational Independency in Orkney* (Cambridge: United Reformed Church History Society, 2006)
- McNaughton, William D., *Early Congregational Independency in Lowland Scotland*, vol. 2 (Tiree: United Reformed Church Synod & the Trustees of Ruaig Congregational Church, 2007)
- Meek, Donald E., 'Evangelical Missionaries in the Early Nineteenth-Century Highlands', *Scottish Studies*, 28 (1987), 1-34
- Meek, Donald E., *The Quest for Celtic Christianity* (Millfield: Handsel Press, 2000)
- Miller, Alexander, 'Iona Community: An Experiment in Catholicity and Contemporaneity', *Theology Today*, 6:2 (1949), 224-234
- Mitchell, Jolyon P., *Visually Speaking: Radio and the Renaissance of Preaching* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1999)
- Moodie, W.M., *A Cobbler's Remarks on a Journal of a tour Through the Northern Counties of Scotland* (Edinburgh [n.p.] 1798)
- Morgan, Deric Llwyd, *The Great Awakening in Wales*, trans. by Dyfnallt Morgan (London: Epworth Press, 1988)

- Morris, Colin, *Raising the Dead: The Art of the Preacher as Public Performer* (London: Fount, 1996)
- Morton, T. Ralph, *What is the Iona Community?* (Glasgow: Iona Community, 1957)
- Morton, T. Ralph, *The Iona Community* (Edinburgh: St Andrew Press, 1977)
- Moynahan, Brian, *William Tyndale: If God Spare My Life* (London: Abacus, 2003)
- Mozley, J. F., *William Tyndale* (London: SPCK, 1937)
- Naked Thoughts on Some of the Peculiarities of the Field Preaching Clergy: In a Letter to a Friend: By a Member of the Church of England* (London: J. Pridden, 1776)
- Nicol, Martin, 'Dramaturgical Homiletic in Germany- preaching as Art Among the Arts', *Homiletic*, 29:2, trans. by Virgil Howard, (2004), 12-19
- OAC News: Anniversary Edition* (OAC Ministries: 2008)
- Old, Hughes Oliphant, *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures: In the Worship of the Christian Church*, 6 vols (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998-2007)
- Ong, Walter J., *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982)
- Open-Air Evangelism Training Manual* (Manchester: OAC, 2006)
- Open Air Evangelism: A Training Presentation* (Nazareth PA: OAC, 1985)
- Osborn, Ronald E., *Folly of God: The Rise of Christian Preaching: A History of Christian Preaching*, vol. 1 (St Louis: Chalice Press, 1999)
- Owst, G.R., *Preaching in Medieval England: An Introduction to Sermon Manuscripts of the Period, c. 1350-1450* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926)
- Pagitt, Doug, *Preaching Re-Imagined: The Role of the Sermon in Communities of Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005)
- Peel, Mark, *The Last Wesleyan* (Lancaster: Scotforth Books, 2008)
- Pelias, Ronald J., and Tracy Stephenson Shaffer, *Performance Studies: The Interpretation of Aesthetic Texts*, 2nd edn (Dubuque: Kendall/Hunt, 2007)
- Philip, Robert, *The Life, Times and Missionary Enterprises of the Rev. John Campbell* (London: John Snow, 1841)
- Pike, Godfrey Holden, *Beneath the Blue Sky: Preaching in the Open-Air* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1888)
- Pleasants, Phyllis Rodgeron, 'He was Ancientfuture before Ancientfuture was Cool', *Perspectives in Religious Studies*, 31:1 (2004), 83-97
- Quicke, Michael, J., *360 Degree Preaching: Hearing, Speaking, and Living the Word* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003)
- Reach the City Cardiff – 2008* (OM Lifehope/ OAC Ministries, 2008)
- Rebuilding the Common Life: Foundation Documents of the Iona Community* (Glasgow: Wild Goose, 1988)

- Reid, Robert, Stephen, *The Four Voices of Preaching: Connecting Purpose and Identity Behind the Pulpit* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006)
- Rice, Charles L., 'The Theatre and Preaching', *Journal for Preachers*, 8:1 (1984), 19-25
- Rice, Charles L., *The Embodied Word: Preaching as Art and Liturgy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991)
- Robb, Nigel J., *The Preaching Triangle* (Edinburgh: The Ministry Department of the Church of Scotland, 1999)
- Rogers, Charles, 'Memoir of George Wishart, the Scottish Martyr. With His Translation of the Helvetian Confession, and a Gene-Alogical History of the Family of Wishart', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4 (1876), 260-363
- Ross, James, *A History of Congregational Independency in Scotland* (James MacLehose & Sons: Glasgow, 1900)
- Sanderson, Christopher Carter, *Gorilla Theatre: A Practical Guide to Performing the New Outdoor Theatre, Anytime, Anywhere* (New York: Routledge, 2003)
- Saunders, Stanley P., and Charles L. Campbell, *The Word on the Street: Performing the Scriptures in the Urban Context* (Cambridge: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2000)
- Sennett, Herbert, *Religion and Dramatics: The Relationship Between Christianity and the Theatre Arts* (London: University Press of America, 1995)
- Sennett, Herbert, 'Preaching as Performance: A Preliminary Analytical Model', *The Journal of Religion and Theatre*, 2:1 (2003), 141-156, http://www.rtjournal.org/vol_2/no_1/sennet.html, accessed 25/10/07
- Schechner, Richard, 'A New Paradigm for Theatre in the Academy', *The Drama Review*, 36:4 (1992), 7-10
- Schechner, Richard, *Performance Theory*, rev. edn (London: Routledge, 1988)
- Schechner, Richard, *Performance Studies: An Introduction*, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2006)
- Schmidt, Leigh Eric, *Holy Fairs: Scottish Communion and American Revivals in the Early Modern Period*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989)
- Schmit, Clayton J., 'Only Say the Word: The Performatory Power of Preaching and Liturgical Speech', *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (1999), 115-129
- Schmit, Clayton J., *Public Reading of Scripture* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002)
- Schmit, Clayton J., *Too Deep for Words: A Theology of Liturgical Expression: The Power of Preaching, Prayer, and Ritual in Worship* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002)
- Shepard, Benjamin, and Ronald Hayduk, eds., *From ACT UP to the WTO: Urban Protest and Community Building in the Era of Globalization* (London: Verso, 2002)

- Sherwood, Yvonne, 'Prophetic Performance Art', *The Bible and Critical Theory*, 2:1 (2006), 1.1- 1.4
- Shiner, Whitney, *Proclaiming the Gospel: First-Century Performance of Mark* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003)
- Shrum, Wesley Monroe, *Fringe and Fortune: The Role of Critics in High and Popular Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996)
- Shut Them Down!: The G8, Gleneagles 2005 and the Movement of Movements* (Leeds: Dissent, 2005)
- Schutzman, Mady, and Jan Cohen-Cruz, eds., *Playing Boal: Theatre, Therapy, Activism* (London: Routledge, 1994)
- Simms, Graham, *Preaching and Painting the Gospels* (Brighton: OAC, 1981)
- Smith, G.C., *The Open Air Preaching Hymn Book and the Canopy of Heaven* (London: British Open Air Preaching Society, 1830)
- Somerset, Fiona, Jill C. Havens and Derrick G. Pittard, eds., *Lollards and their Influence: In Late Medieval England* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2003)
- Soper, Donald, *Advocacy of the Gospel* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1961)
- Sparks, O. Ben., 'Ye Gates Lift Up Your Heads on High', *Journal for Preachers*, 30:2 (2007), 16-21
- Sprenger, Mike, *Presenting Jesus in the Open Air* (Milton Keynes: Word, 1988)
- Spurgeon, Charles H., *Second Series of Lectures to My Students: Being Addresses Delivered to the Students of The Pastors College, Metropolitan Tabernacle* (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1881)
- Stackhouse, John G., ed., *Evangelical Futures: A Conversation on Theological Method* (Leicester: IVP, 2000)
- Stevenson, Geoffrey, and Stephen Wright, *Preaching With Humanity* (London: Church House Publishing, 2008)
- Stewart, William R., 'Crown of Thorns: Ancient Prophecy and the (Post)modern Spectacle', *The Bible and Critical Theory*, 2:1 (2006), 4.1-4.24
- Stott, John R., *I Believe in Preaching* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1982)
- Stout, Harry, S., *The Divine Dramatist: George Whitefield and the Rise of Modern Evangelicalism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1991)
- Talbot, Brian, *The Search for a Common Identity: The Origins of the Baptist Union of Scotland 1800-1870*, Studies in Baptist History and Thought, vol. 9 (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003)
- Talen, Bill, *What Should I Do If Reverend Billy is in My Store* (New York: The New Press, 2003)
- Taylor, William M., *The Scottish Pulpit: From the Reformation to the Present Day* (Birmingham: Solid Ground Christian Books, 2004=1887)
- Theissen, Gerd, *The Sign Language of Faith* (London: SCM Press, 1995)

- Thompson, D.D., *John Wesley as a Social Reformer* (New York: Curts & Jennings, 1998) Thomson, David Cleghorn, *Scotland in Quest of Her Youth* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1932)
- Tisdale, Leonora Tubbs, *Preaching as Local Theology and Folk Art* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997)
- Training Manual* (Nazareth PA: OAC [n.d.])
- Tugwell, Simon, ed., *Early Dominicans: Selected Writings* (London: SPCK, 1982)
- ‘Turn to God’ (Cardiff: OAC Ministries, 2001=1987)
- Turner, Victor, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (New York: Aldine De Gruyter, 1969)
- Turner, Victor, *The Anthropology of Performance* (New York: PAK Publications, 1987)
- Vanhoozer, Kevin J., *The Drama of Doctrine: A Canonical –linguistic Approach to Christian Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004)
- Walker, Pamela, J., *Pulling The Devil’s Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001)
- Wallis, Jim, *Waging Peace: A Handbook for the Struggle to Abolish Nuclear Weapons* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1982)
- Ward, Reginald, and Richard P. Heitzenrater, eds., *The Works of John Wesley, Journal and Diaries II (1738-1743)*, vol. 19 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1990)
- Ward, Richard F., *Speaking from the Heart: Preaching with Passion* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2001=1992)
- Ward, Richard F., ‘The Birth of a Performance Perspective: Preaching as a Communicative Art’, *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (1996), 51-60
- Ward, Richard F., *Speaking of the Holy: The Art of Communication in Preaching* (Missouri: Chalice Press, 2001)
- Ward, Richard F., ‘Making a Profession of Faith: On Teaching Performance Studies in a Theological School’, *Academy of Homiletics Papers* (2001), 254-263
- Webber, F.R., *History of Preaching In Britain and America: Including the Biographies of Many Princes of the Pulpit and the Men Who Influenced Them*, 3 vols (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1952-1957)
- Wells, Simon, *Improvisation: The Drama of Christian Ethics* (London: SPCK, 2004)
- Wheeler, Sondra, ‘John Wesley and “Social Ethics”’, (2002), http://www.livedtheology.org/wkgp_power_4.htm, accessed, 12/4/07
- Willcock, John, *A Shetland Minister of the Eighteenth Century being Passages in the Life of the Reverend John Mill* (Lerwick: T & T Manson, 1898)
- Williams, C.H., *William Tyndale* (London: Nelson, 1969)

- Willimon, William H., and Richard Lischer, eds., *Concise Encyclopedia of Preaching* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995)
- Wilkinson, Oliver Marlow, *First Report of Experiments in Drama: Carried Out in Community House Glasgow* (Glasgow: Iona Youth Trust [n.d.])
- Wilkinson, Oliver Marlow, *The Journey: A Play created by a Group in Community House, Glasgow under the direction of Oliver Marlow Wilkinson* (London: The Religious Drama Society, 1949)
- Wilson, Edwin, *The Theater Experience*, 7th edn ((New York: McGraw-Hill, 1998)
- Wilson, Paul Scott, *Preaching and Homiletical Theory* (St Louis: Chalice Press, 2004)
- Wilson, Paul Scott, *The Practice of Preaching*, rev. edn (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007)
- Wylie, J.A., *The History of Protestantism*, vol. 3 (London: Cassell, Peter, Galpin, 1877)
- Young, Frances, *The Art of Performance: Towards a Theology of Holy Scripture* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1990)
- Yuille, George, ed., *History of the Baptists in Scotland: from Pre-Reformation Times* (Glasgow: Baptist Union Publications Committee, 1926)

Unpublished Theses and Dissertations

- Blythe, Stuart, 'The Place and Function of Preaching in the Church's Mission: A Theological Interpretation with Reference to Luke 4:16-30' (unpublished master's thesis, University of Wales, 2002)
- Hunter, George Gill, 'Evangelistic Rhetoric in Secular Britain: The Theory and Speaking of Donald Soper and Bryan Green' (unpublished PhD dissertation, Evanston, Illinois, 1972)
- Reynolds, R.M., 'Moving Targets: Political Theatre in a Post-Political Age' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Canterbury, 2006)
- Wallace, D. E., 'The Life and Work of James Alexander Haldane' (unpublished PhD thesis, Edinburgh University, 1955)

Newspapers and Periodicals

Clydebank Press

Coracle

Evangelical Repository

Evening Times

Glasgow Herald

Govan Old Parish Magazine

Govan Press

Independent

Life and Work

Missionary Magazine

Observer

Press and Journal

Scotsman

Sunday Post

The Times

Archive and Unpublished Material Relating to MacLeod

‘Hugh Douglas’, unpublished recollections [unnumbered], property of Molly Harvey, Glasgow.

‘Kirk Session Minutes’, Govan Old Parish Church, 1930-1938

‘MacLeod of Fuinary and Iona Community’, National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, accession 9084/209

‘Oral History of the Iona Community: The Early Years’, by Anne Muir, property of the Iona Community

‘Scottish CND Archives, 1956-60’, Mitchell Library, Glasgow, SR. 181 TOC

‘Tom Anderson Album’, Mitchell Library, Glasgow, TD51

Material specifically cited from MacLeod Archive (ascending file numbers)

St. John's Kirk Chronicle, (January 1942), acc9084/59

'Correspondence between MacLeod and the Rev. John White', concerning the Clydebank experience, acc9084/180

'Invitation Card sent out in connection with the Clydebank mission', acc9084/180

'Letter from Bob Craig to George MacLeod', 14th July 1941, acc9084/180

'Memo on Clydebank as at Oct. 1941', acc9084/180

'Position in Clydebank', [n.d.], acc9084/180

'Proposed Co-operation', [n.d.], acc9084/180

'Letter from George MacLeod to J. Pitt Watson', 22nd June 1949, acc9084/209

'Letter from George MacLeod to the General Committee of Tell Scotland', 28th April, 1954, acc9084/254

'Photograph of MacLeod' probably at 'Week of Friendship' in 1934, acc9084/464

'Sermon Text' [untitled], delivered at the dedication of a replica Celtic Cross at Govan Cross in November 1937, acc9084/572

'Corporate Documents' relating to OAC Ministries (GB)

'Job Description for Associate Evangelists' [n.d.]

'Requirements for Staff Applicants' [n.d.]

'Rules of Open Air Campaigners (GB)' as adopted at the Annual Meeting on the 6th May 1986 and as amended at subsequent General Meetings up till September 2005

'Training Modules' [n.d.]

Other Sources

(AUDIO)

'Sermon by George MacLeod', at the Church of St. Andrew and St. Paul, Montreal, 1947, download, Wild Goose Publications, <http://www.ionabooks.com/Song-Audio/SermonAudio-Sermon-by-George-MacLeod-1947.html>, accessed, 16/1/2009

(CD-ROM)

Gurnett, Stephen, *Forty Sketch Board Messages for Street Preachers* (London: OAC, 2008 [on CD-ROM])

(Film)

Alf Goes to Work, Dir, Robert Newman, National Council of Churches, USA (1960)

Can These Stones Live?, Dir, Vernon Sproxton, BBC Television (1964)

Iona Club, ABC Television (1950's)

Sermon in Stone (1966)

Appendix 1

Dramatistic Pentad and Specific Questions used:

Who is speaking? (Agent)

1. What *physical characteristics* does the speaker possess? Tall? Strong? Attractive? Etc. How does the speaker dress? How does the speaker's body move? How does the speaker's voice sound?
2. What are the speaker's *demographic characteristics*? Age? Sex? Education? Religion? Race? Nationality? Socioeconomic Status? Etc.
3. What *attitudes* does the speaker have? Towards self? The audience? The subject? Do the speaker's attitudes change?
4. What *psychological characteristics* does the speaker possess? What is the speaker's disposition? Personality? Morality? Is the speaker likeable?
5. Is the speaker *alone*? With others? A member of a group or organisation?

Why is the speaker speaking? (Purpose)

1. What *motivates* the speaker to speak? To entertain? To persuade? To inform? To understand? Etc.
2. What *values* guide the speaker's utterance? Aesthetic conventions? Political agenda? Ethical concerns? Theological commitments? Etc.

Where and when is the speaker speaking? (Scene a)

1. In what *performative context* does the speaker speak? Social? Theatrical? Political? Commercial? Does the speaker recognise the context as artistic and or dramatic?
2. In what *historical / cultural setting* is the speaker speaking?
3. In what *specific physical location and temporal dimension* does the speaker speak? How does the speaker relate to this location? In what way does the

speaker make use of it? How significant is this location to what the speaker is saying?

To whom is the speaker speaking? (Scene b)

1. To what *audience* is the speaker speaking? Self? A specific other? A general audience? Does the audience change during the speaker's utterance?
2. What is the speaker's *relationship to the audience*? Intimate? Friendly? Distant? Condescending? Etc.
3. What effect does the *audience have* on the speaker? Physical? Psychological?
4. What effect does *speaker have* on audience? Reactions: Vocal? Physical?

What is the speaker saying? (Act)

1. What does the speaker *mean*? What is the general sense or theme? What are key specific ideas?
2. What is the speaker *doing* when speaking? Standing? Walking? Moving?
3. How does speaker *utilise the Scriptures*?
4. What *references to culture* does the speaker make?

How is the speaker speaking? (Agency)

1. What *dimensions* of voice are used by the speaker? Clarity? Variety? Quality?
2. In what *style* is the speaker speaking? What are the qualities of the speaker's language? Formal or informal? Concrete or abstract? Simple or complex? Etc. What language devices does the speaker employ? Metaphor? Oxymoron? Personification? Etc.
3. In what *structure* is the speaker speaking? How does the speaker organize the utterance? What forms does the speaker use? What is the speaker's point of view? How does the speaker use sentence length, punctuation, and rhythm?